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CLXXXIX

SELECTED POEMS

OF

WORDSWORTH

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SELECTED POEMS OF
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH



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HUMPHREY MILFORD

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Born, Cockermouth, Westmoreland . . April 7, 1770
Died, Rydal Mount, Westmoreland . . April 23, 1850

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IF thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,
Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content :—
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,
And they that from the zenith dart their beams,
(Visible though they be to half the earth,
Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)
Are yet of no diviner origin,
No purer essence, than the one that burns,
Like an untended watch-fire, on the ridge
Of some dark mountain ; or than those which seem
Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,
Among the branches of the leafless trees ;
All are the undying offspring of one Sire :
Then, to the measure of the light vouchsafed,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content.

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH

ON LEAVING SCHOOL

DEAR native regions, I foretell,
From what I feel at this farewell,
That, wheresoe'er my steps may tend,
And whensoe'er my course shall end,
If in that hour a single tie
Survive of local sympathy,
My soul will cast the backward view,
The longing look alone on you.

Thus, while the Sun sinks down to rest
Far in the regions of the west,
Though to the vale no parting beam
Be given, not one memorial gleam,
A lingering light he fondly throws
On the dear hills where first he rose.

10

WRITTEN IN VERY EARLY YOUTH

CALM is all nature as a resting wheel.
The kine are couched upon the dewy grass ;
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,
Is cropping audibly his later meal :
Dark is the ground ; a slumber seems to steal
O'er vale, and mountain, and the starless sky.
Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to heal
That grief for which the senses still supply
Fresh food ; for only then, when memory

10

Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends ! restrain
 Those busy cares that would allay my pain ;
 Oh ! leave me to myself, nor let me feel
 The officious touch that makes me droop again.

REMEMBRANCE OF COLLINS

COMPOSED UPON THE THAMES NEAR RICHMOND.

GLIDE gently, thus for ever glide,
 O Thames ! that other bards may see
 As lovely visions by thy side
 As now, fair river ! come to me.
 O glide, fair stream ! for ever so,
 Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,
 Till all our minds for ever flow
 As thy deep waters now are flowing.

Vain thought !—Yet be as now thou art,
 'That in thy waters may be seen
 The image of a poet's heart,
 How bright, how solemn, how serene !
 Such as did once the Poet bless,
 Who, murmuring here a later¹ ditty,
 Could find no refuge from distress
 But in the milder grief of pity.

10

Now let us, as we float along,
 For *him* suspend the dashing oar ;
 And pray that never child of song
 May know that Poet's sorrows more.
 How calm ! how still ! the only sound,
 The dripping of the oar suspended !
 —The evening darkness gathers round
 By virtue's holiest Powers attended.

20

¹ Collins's Ode on the death of Thomson, the last written, I believe, of the poems which were published during his lifetime. This Ode is also alluded to in the next stanza.

LINES

LEFT UPON A SEAT IN A YEW-TREE, WHICH STANDS NEAR
THE LAKE OF ESTHWAITE, ON A DESOLATE PART OF
THE SHORE, COMMANDING A BEAUTIFUL PROSPECT.

NAY, Traveller ! rest. This lonely Yew-tree stands
Far from all human dwelling : what if here
No sparkling rivulet spread the verdant herb ?
What if the bee love not these barren boughs ?
Yet, if the wind breathe soft, the curling waves,
That break against the shore, shall lull thy mind
By one soft impulse saved from vacancy.

—————Who he was
That piled these stones and with the mossy sod
First covered, and here taught this aged Tree 10
With its dark arms to form a circling bower,
I well remember.—He was one who owned
No common soul. In youth by science nursed,
And led by nature into a wild scene
Of lofty hopes, he to the world went forth
A favoured Being, knowing no desire
Which genius did not hallow ; 'gainst the taint
Of dissolute tongues, and jealousy, and hate,
And scorn,—against all enemies prepared,
All but neglect. The world, for so it thought, 20
Owed him no service ; wherefore he at once
With indignation turned himself away,
And with the food of pride sustained his soul
In solitude.—Stranger ! these gloomy boughs
Had charms for him ; and here he loved to sit,
His only visitants a straggling sheep,
The stone-chat, or the glancing sand-piper :
And on these barren rocks, with fern and heath,
And juniper and thistle, sprinkled o'er,
Fixing his downcast eye, he many an hour 30
A morbid pleasure nourished, tracing here
An emblem of his own unfruitful life :
And, lifting up his head, he then would gaze

On the more distant scene,—how lovely 'tis
 Thou seest,—and he would gaze till it became
 Far lovelier, and his heart could not sustain
 The beauty, still more beauteous ! Nor, that time,
 When nature had subdued him to herself,
 Would he forget those Beings to whose minds
 Warm from the labours of benevolence
 The world, and human life, appeared a scene
 Of kindred loveliness : then he would sigh,
 Inly disturbed, to think that others felt
 What he must never feel : and so, lost Man !
 On visionary views would fancy feed,
 Till his eye streamed with tears. In this deep vale
 He died,—this seat his only monument.

40

If Thou be one whose heart the holy forms
 Of young imagination have kept pure,
 Stranger ! henceforth be warned ; and know that pride
 Howe'er disguised in its own majesty,
 Is littleness ; that he who feels contempt
 For any living thing, hath faculties
 Which he has never used ; that thought with him
 Is in its infancy. The man whose eye
 Is ever on himself doth look on one,
 The least of Nature's works, one who might move
 The wise man to that scorn which wisdom holds
 Unlawful, ever. O be wiser, Thou !
 Instructed that true knowledge leads to love ;
 True dignity abides with him alone
 Who, in the silent hour of inward thought,
 Can still suspect, and still revere himself,
 In lowliness of heart.

51

60

THE FEMALE VAGRANT

By Derwent's side my Father's cottage stood,
 (The Woman thus her artless story told)
 One field, a flock, and what the neighbouring flood
 Supplied, to him were more than mines of gold.

Light was my sleep ; my days in transport roll'd :
 With thoughtless joy I stretch'd along the shore
 My father's nets, or watched, when from the fold
 High o'er the cliffs I led my fleecy store,
 A dizzy depth below ! his boat and twin kling oar.

My father was a good and pious man, 10
 An honest man by honest parents bred,
 And I believe that, soon as I began
 To lisp, he made me kneel beside my bed,
 And in his hearing there my prayers I said :
 And afterwards, by my good father taught,
 I read, and loved the books in which I read ;
 For books in every neighbouring house I sought,
 And nothing to my mind a sweeter pleasure brought.

Can I forget what charms did once adorn
 My garden, stored with pease, and mint, and thyme,
 And rose and lily for the sabbath morn ? 21
 The sabbath bells, and their delightful chime ;
 The gambols and wild freaks at shearing time ;
 My hen's rich nest through long grass scarce espied ;
 The cowslip-gathering at May's dewy prime ;
 The swans, that, when I sought the water-side,
 From far to meet me came, spreading their snowy pride.

The staff I yet remember which upbore
 The bending body of my active sire ;
 His seat beneath the honeyed sycamore 30
 When the bees hummed, and chair by winter fire ;
 When market-morning came, the neat attire
 With which, though bent on haste, myself I deck'd ;
 My watchful dog, whose starts of furious ire,
 When stranger passed, so often I have check'd ;
 The red-breast known for years, which at my casement
 peck'd.

The suns of twenty summers danced along,—
 Ah ! little marked, how fast they rolled away :
 Then rose a mansion proud our woods among,
 And cottage after cottage owned its sway, 40

No joy to see a neighbouring house, or stray
 Through pastures not his own, the master took ;
 My Father dared his greedy wish gainsay ;
 He loved his old hereditary nook,
 And ill could I the thought of such sad parting
 brook.

But, when he had refused the proffered gold,
 To cruel injuries he became a prey,
 Sore traversed in whate'er he bought and sold :
 His troubles grew upon him day by day,
 Till all his substance fell into decay. 50
 His little range of water was denied ;¹
 All but the bed where his old body lay,
 All, all was seized, and weeping, side by side,
 We sought a home where we uninjured might abide.

Can I forget that miserable hour,
 When from the last hill-top, my sire surveyed,
 Peering above the trees, the steeple tower,
 That on his marriage-day sweet music made ?
 Till then he hoped his bones might there be laid,
 Close by my mother in their native bowers : 60
 Bidding me trust in God, he stood and prayed,—
 I could not pray :—through tears that fell in showers,
 Glimmer'd our dear-loved home, alas ! no longer
 ours !

There was a youth whom I had loved so long,
 That when I loved him not I cannot say.
 'Mid the green mountains many and many a song
 We two had sung, like little birds in May.
 When we began to tire of childish play
 We seemed still more and more to prize each other :
 We talked of marriage and our marriage day ; 70
 And I in truth did love him like a brother,
 For never could I hope to meet with such another.

¹ Several of the Lakes in the north of England are let out to different Fishermen, in parcels marked out by imaginary lines drawn from rock to rock.

His father said, that to a distant town
He must repair, to ply the artist's trade.
What tears of bitter grief till then unknown !
What tender vows our last sad kiss delayed !
To him we turned :—we had no other aid.
Like one revived, upon his neck I wept,
And her whom he had loved in joy, he said
He well could love in grief : his faith he kept ; 80
And in a quiet home once more my father slept.

Four years each day with daily bread was blest,
By constant toil and constant prayer supplied.
Three lovely infants lay upon my breast ;
And often, viewing their sweet smiles, I sighed,
And knew not why. My happy father died
When sad distress reduced the children's meal :
Thrice happy ! that from him the grave did hide
The empty loom, cold hearth, and silent wheel,
And tears that flowed for ills which patience could
not heal. 90

'Twas a hard change, an evil time was come ;
We had no hope, and no relief could gain.
But soon, with proud parade, the noisy drum
Beat round, to sweep the streets of want and pain.
My husband's arms now only served to strain
Me and his children hungering in his view :
In such dismay my prayers and tears were vain :
To join those miserable men he flew ;
And now to the sea-coast, with numbers more, we drew.

There foul neglect for months and months we bore,
Nor yet the crowded fleet its anchor stirred. 101
Green fields before us and our native shore,
By fever, from polluted air incurred,
Ravage was made, for which no knell was heard.
Fondly we wished, and wished away, nor knew,
'Mid that long sickness, and those hopes deferr'd,
That happier days we never more must view :
The parting signal streamed, at last the land withdrew,

But from delay the summer calms were past.
 On as we drove, the equinoctial deep 110
 Ran mountains-high before the howling blast.
 We gazed with terror on the gloomy sleep
 Of them that perished in the whirlwind's sweep,
 Untaught that soon such anguish must ensue,
 Our hopes such harvest of affliction reap,
 That we the mercy of the waves should rue.
 We reached the western world, a poor, devoted crew.

Oh ! dreadful price of being to resign
 All that is dear *in* being ! better far
 In Want's most lonely cave till death to pine, 120
 Unseen, unheard, unwatched by any star ;
 Or in the streets and walks where proud men are,
 Better our dying bodies to obtrude,
 Than dog-like, wading at the heels of war,
 Protract a curst existence, with the brood
 That lap (their very nourishment !) their brother's
 blood.

The pains and plagues that on our heads came down,
 Disease and famine, agony and fear,
 In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,
 It would thy brain unsettle even to hear. 130
 All perished—all, in one remorseless year,
 Husband and children ! one by one, by sword
 And ravenous plague, all perished : every tear
 Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board
 A British ship I waked, as from a trance restored.

Peaceful as some immeasurable plain
 By the first beams of dawning light impress'd,
 In the calm sunshine slept the glittering main.
 The very ocean has its hour of rest,
 That comes not to the human mourner's breast. 140
 Remote from man, and storms of mortal care,
 A heavenly silence did the waves invest ;
 I looked and looked along the silent air,
 Until it seemed to bring a joy to my despair.

Ah ! how unlike those late terrific sleeps !
 And groans, that rage of racking famine spoke,
 Where looks inhuman dwelt on festering heaps !
 The breathing pestilence that rose like smoke !
 The shriek that from the distant battle broke !
 The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid host 150
 Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-stroke
 To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick anguish toss'd,
 Hope died, and fear itself in agony was lost !

Yet does that burst of woe congeal my frame,
 When the dark streets appeared to heave and gape,
 While like a sea the storming army came,
 And Fire from Hell reared his gigantic shape,
 And Murder, by the ghastly gleam, and Rape
 Seized their joint prey, the mother and the child !
 But from these crazing thoughts my brain, escape !
 —For weeks the balmy air breathed soft and mild,
 And on the gliding vessel Heaven and Ocean smiled.

Some mighty gulf of separation past, 163
 I seemed transported to another world :—
 A thought resigned with pain, when from the mast
 The impatient mariner the sail unfurl'd,
 And whistling, called the wind that hardly curled
 The silent sea. From the sweet thoughts of home,
 And from all hope I was forever hurled.
 For me—farthest from earthly port to roam 170
 Was best, could I but shun the spot where man might
 come.

And oft, robb'd of my perfect mind, I thought
 At last my feet a resting-place had found :
 Here will I weep in peace, (so fancy wrought,)
 Roaming the illimitable waters round ;
 Here watch, of every human friend disowned,
 All day, my ready tomb the ocean-flood—
 To break my dream the vessel reached its bound :
 And homeless near a thousand homes I stood,
 And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food.

By grief enfeebled was I turned adrift, 181
 Helpless as sailor cast on desert rock ;
 Nor morsel to my mouth that day did lift,
 Nor dared my hand at any door to knock.
 I lay, where with his drowsy mates, the cock
 From the cross timber of an out-house hung ;
 How dismal tolled, that night, the city clock !
 At morn my sick heart hunger scarcely stung,
 Nor to the beggar's language could I frame my tongue.

So passed another day, and so the third : 190
 Then did I try, in vain, the crowd's resort,
 In deep despair by frightful wishes stirr'd,
 Near the sea-side I reached a ruined fort :
 There, pains which nature could no more support,
 With blindness linked, did on my vitals fall ;
 Dizzy my brain, with interruption short
 Of hideous sense ; I sunk, nor step could crawl,
 And thence was borne away to neighbouring hospital.

Recovery came with food : but still, my brain
 Was weak, nor of the past had memory. 200
 I heard my neighbours, in their beds, complain
 Of many things which never troubled me ;
 Of feet still bustling round with busy glee,
 Of looks where common kindness had no part,
 Of service done with careless cruelty,
 Fretting the fever round the languid heart,
 And groans, which, as they said, would make a dead
 man start.

These things just served to stir the torpid sense,
 Nor pain nor pity in my bosom raised.
 Memory, though slow, returned with strength ; and
 thence

Dismissed, again on open day I gazed, 211
 At houses, men, and common light, amazed.
 The lanes I sought, and as the sun retired,
 Came, where beneath the trees a faggot blazed ;
 The wild brood saw me weep, my fate inquired,
 And gave me food, and rest, more welcome, more desired.

My heart is touched to think that men like these,
The rude earth's tenants, were my first relief :
How kindly did they paint their vagrant ease !
And their long holiday that feared not grief, 220
For all belonged to all, and each was chief.
No plough their sinews strained ; on grating road
No wain they drove, and yet, the yellow sheaf
In every vale for their delight was stowed :
For them, in nature's meads, the milky udder flowed.

Semblance, with straw and panniered ass, they made
Of potters wandering on from door to door :
But life of happier sort to me pourtrayed,
And other joys my fancy to allure ;
The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight moor 230
In barn uplighted, and companions boon
Well met from far with revelry secure,
In depth of forest glade, when jocund June
Rolled fast along the sky his warm and genial moon.

But ill it suited me, in journey dark
O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to hatch ;
To charm the surly house-dog's faithful bark,
Or hang on tiptoe at the lifted latch ;
The gloomy lantern, and the dim blue match,
The black disguise, the warning whistle shrill, 240
And ear still busy on its nightly watch,
Were not for me, brought up in nothing ill ;
Besides, on griefs so fresh my thoughts were brooding
still.

What could I do, unaided and unblest ?
Poor Father ! gone was every friend of thine :
And kindred of dead husband are at best
Small help, and, after marriage such as mine,
With little kindness would to me incline.
Ill was I then for toil or service fit :
With tears whose course no effort could confine, 250
By high-way side forgetful would I sit
Whole hours, my idle arms in moping sorrow knit.

I lived upon the mercy of the fields,
And oft of cruelty the sky accused ;
On hazard, or what general bounty yields,
Now coldly given, now utterly refused.
The fields I for my bed have often used :
But, what afflicts my peace with keenest ruth
Is, that I have my inner self abused,
Forgone the home delight of constant truth, 260
And clear and open soul, so prized in fearless youth.

Three years a wanderer, often have I view'd,
In tears, the sun towards that country tend
Where my poor heart lost all its fortitude :
And now across this moor my steps I bend—
Oh ! tell me whither——for no earthly friend
Have I.——She ceased, and weeping turned away,
As if because her tale was at an end
She wept ;—because she had no more to say
Of that perpetual weight which on her spirit lay. 270

POEMS REFERRING TO THE PERIOD OF CHILDHOOD

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky :
So was it when my life began ;
So is it now I am a man ;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die !
The Child is father of the Man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

TO A BUTTERFLY

STAY near me—do not take thy flight !
A little longer stay in sight !
Much converse do I find in thee,
Historian of my infancy !
Float near me ; do not yet depart !
Dead times revive in thee :
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art !
A solemn image to my heart,
My father's family !

Oh ! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
The time, when in our childish plays,
My sister Emmeline and I
Together chased the butterfly !

10

A very hunter did I rush
 Upon the prey ;—with leaps and springs
 I followed on from brake to bush ;
 But she, God love her ! feared to brush
 The dust from off its wings.

18

THE SPARROW'S NEST

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
 Those bright blue eggs together laid !
 On me the chance-discovered sight
 Gleamed like a vision of delight.
 I started—seeming to espy
 The home and sheltered bed,
 The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
 My Father's house, in wet or dry
 My sister Emmeline and I
 Together visited.

19

She looked at it and seemed to fear it ;
 Dreading, tho' wishing, to be near it :
 Such heart was in her, being then
 A little Prattler among men.
 The Blessing of my later years
 Was with me when a boy :
 She gave me eyes, she gave me ears ;
 And humble cares, and delicate fears ;
 A heart, the fountain of sweet tears ;
 And love, and thought, and joy.

20

FORESIGHT

THAT is work of waste and ruin—
 Do as Charles and I are doing !
 Strawberry-blossoms, one and all,
 We must spare them—here are many :
 Look at it—the flower is small,
 Small and low, though fair as any '
 Do not touch it ! summers two
 I am older, Anne, than you.

Pull the primrose, sister Anne !
 Pull as many as you can. 10
 —Here are daisies, take your fill ;
 Pansies, and the cuckoo-flower :
 Of the lofty daffodil
 Make your bed, or make your bower ;
 Fill your lap and fill your bosom ;
 Only spare the strawberry-blossom !

Primroses, the Spring may love them—
 Summer knows but little of them :
 Violets, a barren kind,
 Withered on the ground must lie ; 20
 Daisies leave no fruit behind
 When the pretty flowerets die ;
 Pluck them, and another year
 As many will be blowing here.

God has given a kindlier power
 To the favoured strawberry-flower.
 Hither soon as spring is fled
 You and Charles and I will walk ;
 Lurking berries, ripe and red,
 Then will hang on every stalk, 30
 Each within its leafy bower ;
 And for that promise spare the flower !

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CHILD THREE YEARS OLD

LOVING she is, and tractable, though wild ;
 And Innocence hath privilege in her
 To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes ;
 And feats of cunning ; and the pretty round
 Of trespasses, affected to provoke
 Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.
 And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,
 Not less if unattended and alone
 Than when both young and old sit gathered round

And take delight in its activity ; 10
 Even so this happy Creature of herself
 Is all-sufficient ; solitude to her
 Is blithe society, who fills the air
 With gladness and involuntary songs.
 Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's
 Forth-startled from the fern where she lay couched ;
 Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir
 Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-flowers,
 Or from before it chasing wantonly
 The many-coloured images imprest 20
 Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

ALICE FELL ;

OR, POVERTY.

THE post-boy drove with fierce career,
 For threatening clouds the moon had drowned ;
 When, as we hurried on, my ear
 Was smitten with a startling sound.

As if the wind blew many ways,
 I heard the sound,—and more and more ;
 It seemed to follow with the chaise,
 And still I heard it as before.

At length I to the boy called out ;
 He stopped his horses at the word, 10
 But neither cry, nor voice, nor shout,
 Nor aught else like it, could be heard.

The boy then smacked his whip, and fast
 The horses scampered through the rain ;
 But, hearing soon upon the blast
 The cry, I bade him halt again.

Forthwith alighting on the ground,
 “ Whence comes,” said I, “ this piteous moan ? ”
 And there a little Girl I found,
 Sitting behind the chaise, alone. 20

“ My cloak !” no other word she spake,
But loud and bitterly she wept,
As if her innocent heart would break ;
And down from off her seat she leapt.

“ What ails you, child ?”—she sobbed, “ Look
here !”

I saw it in the wheel entangled,
A weather-beaten rag as e'er
From any garden scare-crow dangled.

There, twisted between nave and spoke,
It hung, nor could at once be freed ; 30
But our joint pains unloosed the cloak,
A miserable rag indeed !

“ And whither are you going, child,
To-night along these lonesome ways ?”
“ To Durham,” answered she, half wild—
“ Then come with me into the chaise.”

Insensible to all relief
Sat the poor girl, and forth did send
Sob after sob, as if her grief
Could never, never have an end. 40

“ My child, in Durham do you dwell ?”
She checked herself in her distress,
And said, “ My name is Alice Fell ;
I'm fatherless and motherless.

“ And I to Durham, Sir, belong.”
Again, as if the thought would choke
Her very heart, her grief grew strong ;
And all was for her tattered cloak !

The chaise drove on ; our journey's end
Was nigh ; and, sitting by my side, 50
As if she had lost her only friend
She wept, nor would be pacified.

Up to the tavern-door we post ;
 Of Alice and her grief I told ;
 And I gave money to the host,
 To buy a new cloak for the old.

“ And let it be of duffil grey,
 As warm a cloak as man can sell ! ”
 Proud creature was she the next day,
 The little orphan, Alice Fell !

60

LUCY GRAY ;

OR, SOLITUDE.

OFt I had heard of Lucy Gray :
 And, when I crossed the wild,
 I chanced to see at break of day
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;
 She dwelt on a wide moor,
 —The sweetest thing that ever grew
 Beside a human door !

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
 The hare upon the green ;
 But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
 Will never more be seen.

10

“ To-night will be a stormy night—
 You to the town must go ;
 And take a lantern, Child, to light
 Your mother through the snow.”

“ That, Father ! will I gladly do :
 ’Tis scarcely afternoon—
 The minster-clock has just struck two,
 And yonder is the moon ! ”

20

At this the Father raised his hook,
And snapped a faggot-band ;
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb :
But never reached the town.

30

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

40

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,
“ In heaven we all shall meet ;”
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small ;
And through the broken hawthorn hedge,
And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed :
The marks were still the same ;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost
And to the bridge they came.

50

They followed from the snowy bank
 Those footmarks, one by one,
 Into the middle of the plank ;
 And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
 She is a living child ;
 That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
 Upon the lonesome wild.

60

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
 And never looks behind ;
 And sings a solitary song
 That whistles in the wind.

WE ARE SEVEN

—A SIMPLE Child,
 That lightly draws its breath,
 And feels its life in every limb,
 What should it know of death ?

I met a little cottage Girl :
 She was eight years old, she said ;
 Her hair was thick with many a curl
 That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
 And she was wildly clad ;
 Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;
 —Her beauty made me glad.

10

“ Sisters and brothers, little Maid,
 How many may you be ? ”
 “ How many ? Seven in all,” she said,
 And wondering looked at me.

“ And where are they ? I pray you tell.”
 She answered, “ Seven are we ;
 And two of us at Conway dwell,
 And two are gone to sea.

20

“Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother ;
And, in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.”

“You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven ! I pray you tell,
Sweet Maid, how this may be.”

Then did the little Maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we ;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree.” 30

“You run about, my little Maid,
Your limbs they are alive ;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five.”

“Their graves are green, they may be seen,”
The little Maid replied,
“Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,
And they are side by side. 40

“My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem ;
And there upon the ground I sit,
And sing a song to them.

“And often after sun-set, Sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

“The first that died was sister Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away. 50

"So in the church-yard she was laid ;
And, when the grass was dry,
Together round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

"And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side." 60

"How many are you, then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven ?"
Quick was the little Maid's reply,
"O Master ! we are seven."

"But they are dead ; those two are dead !
Their spirits are in heaven !"
'Twas throwing words away ; for still
The little Maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven !" 69

THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS ;

OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE.¹

A PASTORAL.

THE valley rings with mirth and joy ;
Among the hills the echoes play
A never never ending song,
To welcome in the May.
The magpie chatters with delight ;
The mountain raven's youngling brood
Have left the mother and the nest ;
And they go rambling east and west
In search of their own food ;
Or through the glittering vapours dart 10
In very wantonness of heart.

¹ *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmoreland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
Two boys are sitting in the sun ;
Their work, if any work they have,
Is out of mind—or done.

On pipes of sycamore they play
The fragments of a Christmas hymn ;
Or with that plant which in our dale
We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,
Their rusty hats they trim :

20

And thus, as happy as the day,
Those Shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge
The sand-lark chants a joyous song ;
The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.

A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born ! both earth and sky
Keep jubilee, and, more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal ;
They never hear the cry,

30

That plaintive cry ! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
“ Down to the stump of yon old yew
We'll for our whistles run a race.”

—Away the shepherds flew ;

They leapt—they ran—and when they came
Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,
Seeing that he should lose the prize,

40

“ Stop ! ” to his comrade Walter cries—

James stopped with no good will :

Said Walter then, exulting ; “ Here
You'll find a task for half a year.

“ Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—
Come on, and tread where I shall tread.”
The other took him at his word,
And followed as he led.

It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go ;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock :
The gulf is deep below ;
And, in a basin black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

50

With staff in hand across the cleft
The challenger pursued his march ;
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
The middle of the arch.

When list ! he hears a piteous moan—
Again !—his heart within him dies—
His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
He totters, pallid as a ghost,
And, looking down, espies
A lamb, that in the pool is pent
Within that black and frightful rent.

60

The lamb had slipped into the stream,
And safe without a bruise or wound
The cataract had borne him down
Into the gulf profound.

70

His dam had seen him when he fell,
She saw him down the torrent borne ;
And, while with all a mother's love
She from the lofty rocks above
Sent forth a cry forlorn,
The lamb, still swimming round and round,
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,
That sent this rueful cry, I ween
The Boy recovered heart, and told
The sight which he had seen.
Both gladly now deferred their task ;
Nor was there wanting other aid—

80

A Poet, one who loves the brooks
 Far better than the sages' books,
 By chance had thither strayed ;
 And there the helpless lamb he found
 By those huge rocks encompassed round.

He drew it from the troubled pool,
 And brought it forth into the light : 90
 The Shepherds met him with his charge,
 An unexpected sight !
 Into their arms the lamb they took,
 Whose life and limbs the flood had spared ;
 Then up the steep ascent they hied,
 And placed him at his mother's side ;
 And gently did the Bard
 Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,
 And bade them better mind their trade. 99

ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS

" Retine vim istam, falsa enim dicam, si coges."—EUSEBIUS.

I HAVE a boy of five years old ;
 His face is fair and fresh to see ;
 His limbs are cast in beauty's mould,
 And dearly he loves me.

One morn we strolled on our dry walk,
 Our quiet home all full in view,
 And held such intermitted talk
 As we are wont to do.

My thoughts on former pleasures ran ;
 I thought of Kilve's delightful shore, 10
 Our pleasant home when spring began,
 A long, long year before.

A day it was when I could bear
 Some fond regrets to entertain ;
 With so much happiness to spare,
 I could not feel a pain.

The green earth echoed to the feet
Of lambs that bounded through the glade,
From shade to sunshine, and as fleet
From sunshine back to shade.

20

Birds warbled round me—and each trace
Of inward sadness had its charm ;
Kilve, thought I, was a favoured place,
And so is Liswyn farm.

My boy beside me tripped, so slim
And graceful in his rustic dress !
And, as we talked, I questioned him,
In very idleness.

“ Now tell me, had you rather be,”
I said, and took him by the arm,
“ On Kilve’s smooth shore, by the green sea,
Or here at Liswyn farm ?”

30

In careless mood he looked at me,
While still I held him by the arm,
And said, “ At Kilve I’d rather be
Than here at Liswyn farm.”

“ Now, little Edward, say why so :
My little Edward, tell me why.”—
“ I cannot tell, I do not know.”—
“ Why, this is strange,” said I ;

40

“ For here are woods, hills smooth and warm :
There surely must some reason be
Why you would change sweet Liswyn farm
For Kilve by the green sea.”

At this my boy hung down his head,
He blushed with shame, nor made reply ;
And three times to the child I said,
“ Why, Edward, tell me why ?”

His head he raised—there was in sight,
 It caught his eye, he saw it plain—
 Upon the house-top, glittering bright,
 A broad and gilded vane. 50

Then did the boy his tongue unlock,
 And eased his mind with this reply :
 “ At Kilve there was no weather-cock ;
 And that’s the reason why.”

O dearest, dearest boy ! my heart
 For better lore would seldom yearn,
 Could I but teach the hundredth part
 Of what from thee I learn. 60

THE PET-LAMB

A PASTORAL.

THE dew was falling fast, the stars began to blink ;
 I heard a voice ; it said, “ Drink, pretty creature,
 drink !”

And, looking o’er the hedge, before me I espied
 A snow-white mountain-lamb with a Maiden at its side.

Nor sheep nor kine were near ; the lamb was all alone,
 And by a slender cord was tethered to a stone ;
 With one knee on the grass did the little Maiden kneel,
 While to that mountain-lamb she gave its evening meal.

The lamb, while from her hand he thus his supper took,
 Seemed to feast with head and ears ; and his tail with
 pleasure shook. 10

“ Drink, pretty creature, drink,” she said in such a tone
 That I almost received her heart into my own.

’Twas little Barbara Lewthwaite, a child of beauty rare !
 I watched them with delight, they were a lovely pair.
 Now with her empty can the Maiden turned away :
 But ere ten yards were gone her footsteps did she stay.

Right towards the lamb she looked ; and from a shady
place

I unobserved could see the workings of her face :
If Nature to her tongue could measured numbers bring,
Thus, thought I, to her lamb that little Maid might
sing : 20

“ What ails thee, young One ? what ? Why pull so at
thy cord ?

Is it not well with thee ? well both for bed and board ?
Thy plot of grass is soft, and green as grass can be ;
Rest, little young One, rest ; what is 't that aileth thee ?

“ What is it thou wouldst seek ? What is wanting to
thy heart ?

Thy limbs, are they not strong ? And beautiful thou
art :

This grass is tender grass ; these flowers they have no
peers ;

And that green corn all day is rustling in thy ears !

“ If the sun be shining hot, do but stretch thy woollen
chain, 29

This beech is standing by, its covert thou canst gain ;
For rain and mountain-storms ! the like thou need'st
not fear,

The rain and storm are things that scarcely can come
here.

“ Rest, little young One, rest ; thou hast forgot the day
When my father found thee first in places far away ;
Many flocks were on the hills, but thou wert owned by
none,

And thy mother from thy side for evermore was gone.

“ He took thee in his arms, and in pity brought thee
home :

A blessed day for thee ! then whither wouldst thou
roam ?

A faithful nurse thou hast ; the dam that did thee yearn
Upon the mountain-tops no kinder could have been.

"Thou know'st that twice a day I have brought thee
in this can 41

Fresh water from the brook, as clear as ever ran ;
And twice in the day, when the ground is wet with dew,
I bring thee draughts of milk, warm milk it is and new.

"Thy limbs will shortly be twice as stout as they are
now,

Then I'll yoke thee to my cart like a pony in the plough ;
My playmate thou shalt be ; and when the wind is cold
Our hearth shall be thy bed, our house shall be thy fold.

"It will not, will not rest !—Poor creature, can it be
That 'tis thy mother's heart which is working so in
thee ? 50

Things that I know not of belike to thee are dear,
And dreams of things which thou canst neither see nor
hear.

"Alas, the mountain-tops that look so green and fair !
I've heard of fearful winds and darkness that come there ;
The little brooks that seem all pastime and all play,
When they are angry, roar like lions for their prey.

"Here thou need'st not dread the raven in the sky ;
Night and day thou art safe,—our cottage is hard by.
Why bleat so after me ? Why pull so at thy chain ?
Sleep — and at break of day I will come to thee
again !" 60

—As homeward through the lane I went with lazy feet,
This song to myself did I oftentimes repeat ;
And it seemed, as I retraced the ballad line by line,
That but half of it was hers, and one half of it was *mine*.

Again, and once again, did I repeat the song ;
"Nay," said I, "more than half to the damsel must
belong,
For she looked with such a look, and she spake with
such a tone,
That I almost received her heart into my own."

TO H. C.

SIX YEARS OLD.

O THOU ! whose fancies from afar are brought ;
 Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,
 And fittest to unutterable thought
 The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;
 Thou faery voyager ! that dost float
 In such clear water, that thy boat
 May rather seem
 To brood on air than on an earthly stream ;
 Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,
 Where earth and heaven do make one imagery 10
 O blessèd vision ! happy child !
 Thou art so exquisitely wild,
 I think of thee with many fears
 For what may be thy lot in future years.

· I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,
 Lord of thy house and hospitality ;
 And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest
 But when she sate within the touch of thee.
 O too industrious folly !
 O vain and causeless melancholy ! 20
 Nature will either end thee quite ;
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
 Preserve for thee, by individual right,
 A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.
 What hast thou to do with sorrow,
 Or the injuries of to-morrow ?
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,
 Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ;
 A gem that glitters while it lives, 30
 And no forewarning gives ;
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife
 Slips in a moment out of life.

INFLUENCE OF NATURAL OBJECTS

IN CALLING FORTH AND STRENGTHENING THE IMAGINATION IN BOYHOOD AND EARLY YOUTH.

WISDOM and Spirit of the universe !
 Thou Soul, that art the Eternity of thought !
 And giv'st to forms and images a breath
 And everlasting motion ! not in vain,
 By day or star-light, thus from my first dawn
 Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me
 The passions that build up our human soul ;
 Not with the mean and vulgar works of Man ;
 But with high objects, with enduring things,
 With life and nature ; purifying thus 10
 The elements of feeling and of thought,
 And sanctifying by such discipline
 Both pain and fear,—until we recognise
 A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Nor was this fellowship vouchsafed to me
 With stinted kindness. In November days,
 When vapours rolling down the valleys made
 A lonely scene more lonesome ; among woods
 At noon ; and 'mid the calm of summer nights,
 When, by the margin of the trembling lake, 20
 Beneath the gloomy hills, homeward I went
 In solitude, such intercourse was mine :
 Mine was it in the fields both day and night,
 And by the waters, all the summer long.
 And in the frosty season, when the sun
 Was set, and, visible for many a mile,
 The cottage-windows through the twilight blazed,
 I heeded not the summons : happy time
 It was indeed for all of us ; for me
 It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud 30
 The village-clock tolled six—I wheeled about,
 Proud and exulting like an untired horse

That cares not for his home.—All shod with steel
We hissed along the polished ice, in games
Confederate, imitative of the chase
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,
The pack loud-chiming, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle : with the din
Smitten, the precipices rang aloud ;
The leafless trees and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron ; while far-distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy, not unnoticed while the stars,
Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.

40

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,
To cut across the reflex of a star ;
Image that, flying still before me, gleamed
Upon the glassy plain : and oftentimes,
When we had given our bodies to the wind,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled
With visible motion her diurnal round !
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watched
Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

50

60

POEMS FOUNDED ON THE AFFECTIONS

THE BROTHERS

"THESE Tourists, heaven preserve us! needs must
live

A profitable life : some glance along,
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
And they were butterflies to wheel about
Long as the summer lasted : some, as wise,
Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,
Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,
Until a man might travel twelve stout miles,
Or reap an acre of his neighbour's corn. 10
But, for that moping Son of Idleness,
Why can he tarry *yonder*?—In our church-yard
Is neither epitaph nor monument,
Tombstone nor name—only the turf we tread
And a few natural graves."

To Jane, his wife,
Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.
It was a July evening ; and he sate
Upon the long stone-seat beneath the eaves
Of his old cottage,—as it chanced, that day,
Employed in winter's work. Upon the stone 20
His wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,
While, from the twin cards toothed with glittering wire,
He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
Who, in the open air, with due accord

34 POEMS FOUNDED ON THE AFFECTIONS

Of busy hands and back-and-forward steps,
 Her large round wheel was turning. Towards the field
 In which the Parish Chapel stood alone,
 Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
 While half an hour went by, the Priest had sent
 Many a long look of wonder : and at last, 30
 Risen from his seat, beside the snow-white ridge
 Of carded wool which the old man had piled
 He laid his implements with gentle care,
 Each in the other locked ; and down the path,
 That from his cottage to the church-yard led,
 He took his way, impatient to accost
 The Stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'Twas one well known to him in former days,
 A Shepherd-lad ; who ere his sixteenth year
 Had left that calling, tempted to entrust 40
 His expectations to the fickle winds
 And perilous waters ; with the mariners
 A fellow-mariner ; and so had fared
 Through twenty seasons ; but he had been reared
 Among the mountains, and he in his heart
 Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
 Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
 The tones of waterfalls, and inland sounds
 Of caves and trees :—and when the regular wind
 Between the tropics filled the steady sail, 50
 And blew with the same breath through days and
 weeks,
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line
 Along the cloudless Main, he, in those hours
 Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
 Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze ;
 And, while the broad blue wave and sparkling foam
 Flashed round him images and hues that wrought
 In union with the employment of his heart,
 He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye, 60
 Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
 Saw mountains ; saw the forms of sheep that grazed

On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,
And shepherds clad in the same country grey
Which he himself had worn.¹

And now, at last,
From perils manifold, with some small wealth
Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian Isles,
To his paternal home he is returned,
With a determined purpose to resume
The life he had lived there ; both for the sake 70
Of many darling pleasures, and the love
Which to an only brother he has borne
In all his hardships, since that happy time
When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two
Were brother-shepherds on their native hills.
—They were the last of all their race : and now,
When Leonard had approached his home, his heart
Failed in him ; and, not venturing to enquire
Tidings of one so long and dearly loved,
He to the solitary church-yard turned ; 80
That, as he knew in what particular spot
His family were laid, he thence might learn
If still his Brother lived, or to the file
Another grave was added.—He had found
Another grave,—near which a full half-hour
He had remained ; but, as he gazed, there grew
Such a confusion in his memory,
That he began to doubt ; and even to hope
That he had seen this heap of turf before,—
That it was not another grave ; but one 90
He had forgotten. He had lost his path,
As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked
Through fields which once had been well known to
him :

And oh what joy this recollection now
Sent to his heart ! he lifted up his eyes,
And, looking round, imagined that he saw
Strange alteration wrought on every side

¹ This description of the Calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of the *Hurricane*.

Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks,
And everlasting hills themselves were changed.

By this the Priest, who down the field had come,
Unseen by Leonard, at the church-yard gate 101
Stopped short,—and thence, at leisure, limb by limb
Perused him with a gay complacency.

Ay, thought the Vicar, smiling to himself,
'Tis one of those who needs must leave the path
Of the world's business to go wild alone :
His arms have a perpetual holiday ;
The happy man will creep about the fields,
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles 110
Into his face, until the setting sun
Write fool upon his forehead.—Planted thus
Beneath a shed that over-arched the gate
Of this rude church-yard, till the stars appeared
The good Man might have communed with himself,
But that the Stranger, who had left the grave,
Approached ; he recognised the Priest at once,
And, after greetings interchanged, and given
By Leonard to the Vicar as to one
Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued. 120

Leonard. You live, Sir, in these dales, a quiet life :
Your years make up one peaceful family ;
And who would grieve and fret, if, welcome come
And welcome gone, they are so like each other,
They cannot be remembered ? Scarce a funeral
Comes to this church-yard once in eighteen months ;
And yet, some changes must take place among you :
And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,
Can trace the finger of mortality,
And see, that with our threescore years and ten 130
We are not all that perish.—I remember,
(For many years ago I passed this road)
There was a foot-way all along the fields
By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft !
To me it does not seem to wear the face
Which then it had !

Priest. Nay, Sir, for aught I know,
That chasm is much the same—

Leonard. But, surely, yonder—

Priest. Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend
That does not play you false.—On that tall pike
(It is the loneliest place of all these hills) 140

There were two springs which bubbled side by side,
As if they had been made that they might be
Companions for each other : the huge crag
Was rent with lightning—one hath disappeared ;
The other, left behind, is flowing still.

For accidents and changes such as these,
We want not store of them ;—a water-spout
Will bring down half a mountain ; what a feast
For folks that wander up and down like you,
To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff 150

One roaring cataract! a sharp May-storm
Will come with loads of January snow,
And in one night send twenty score of sheep
To feed the ravens ; or a shepherd dies
By some untoward death among the rocks :
The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge ;
A wood is felled :—and then for our own homes !
A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,
A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
The old house-clock is decked with a new face ; 160
And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates
To chronicle the time, we all have here

A pair of diaries,—one serving, Sir,
For the whole dale, and one for each fire-side—
Yours was a stranger's judgment : for historians,
Commend me to these valleys !

Leonard. Yet your Church-yard
Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,
To say that you are heedless of the past :
An orphan could not find his mother's grave :
Here's neither head nor foot-stone, plate of brass, 170
Cross-bones nor skull,—type of our earthly state
Nor emblem of our hopes : the dead man's home
Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

Priest. Why, there, Sir, is a thought that's new to me !

The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg their bread
If every English church-yard were like ours ;
Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth :
We have no need of names and epitaphs ;
We talk about the dead by our fire-sides.
And then, for our immortal part ! *we want* 180
No symbols, Sir, to tell us that plain tale :
The thought of death sits easy on the man
Who has been born and dies among the mountains.

Leonard. Your Dalesmen, then, do in each other's thoughts

Possess a kind of second life : no doubt
You, Sir, could help me to the history
Of half these graves ?

Priest. For eight-score winters past,
With what I've witnessed, and with what I've heard,
Perhaps I might ; and, on a winter-evening,
If you were seated at my chimney's nook, 190
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;
Yet all in the broad highway of the world.
Now there's a grave—your foot is half upon it,—
It looks just like the rest ; and yet that man
Died broken-hearted.

Leonard. 'Tis a common case.
We'll take another : who is he that lies
Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves ?
It touches on that piece of native rock
Left in the church-yard wall.

Priest. That's Walter Ewbank.
He had as white a head and fresh a cheek 201
As ever were produced by youth and age
Engendering in the blood of hale four-score.
Through five long generations had the heart
Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the bounds
Of their inheritance, that single cottage—
You see it yonder ! and those few green fields.
They toiled and wrought, and still, from sire to son,

Each struggled, and each yielded as before
 A little—yet a little,—and old Walter, 210
 They left to him the family heart, and land
 With other burthens than the crop it bore.
 Year after year the old man still kept up
 A cheerful mind,—and buffeted with bond,
 Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,
 And went into his grave before his time.
 Poor Walter ! whether it was care that spurred him
 God only knows, but to the very last
 He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :
 His pace was never that of an old man : 220
 I almost see him tripping down the path
 With his two grandsons after him :—but you,
 Unless our Landlord be your host to-night,
 Have far to travel,—and on these rough paths
 Even in the longest day of midsummer—

Leonard. But those two Orphans !

Priest. Orphans !—Such they were—
 Yet not while Walter lived :—for, though their parents
 Lay buried side by side as now they lie,
 The old man was a father to the boys,
 Two fathers in one father : and if tears, 230
 Shed when he talked of them where they were not,
 And hauntings from the infirmity of love,
 Are aught of what makes up a mother's heart,
 This old Man, in the day of his old age,
 Was half a mother to them.—If you weep, Sir,
 To hear a stranger talking about strangers,
 Heaven bless you when you are among your kindred !
 Ay—you may turn that way—it is a grave
 Which will bear looking at.

Leonard. These boys—I hope
 They loved this good old Man ?—

Priest. They did—and truly :
 But that was what we almost overlooked, 241
 They were such darlings of each other. Yes,
 Though from the cradle they had lived with Walter,
 The only kinsman near them, and though he
 Inclined to both by reason of his age,

With a more fond, familiar, tenderness ;
 They, notwithstanding, had much love to spare,
 And it all went into each other's hearts.
 Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,
 Was two years taller : 'twas a joy to see, 250
 To hear, to meet them !—From their house the school
 Is distant three short miles, and in the time
 Of storm and thaw, when every water-course
 And unbridged stream, such as you may have noticed
 Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,
 Was swoln into a noisy rivulet,
 Would Leonard then, when elder boys remained
 At home, go staggering through the slippery fords,
 Bearing his brother on his back. I have seen him,
 On windy days, in one of those stray brooks, 260
 Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-leg deep,
 Their two books lying both on a dry stone,
 Upon the hither side : and once I said,
 As I remember, looking round these rocks
 And hills on which we all of us were born,
 That God who made the great book of the world
 Would bless such piety—

Leonard. It may be then—

Priest. Never did worthier lads break English bread ;
 The very brightest Sunday Autumn saw,
 With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts, 270
 Could never keep those boys away from church,
 Or tempt them to an hour of sabbath breach.
 Leonard and James ! I warrant, every corner
 Among these rocks, and every hollow place
 That venturous foot could reach, to one or both
 Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.
 Like roe-bucks they went bounding o'er the hills ;
 They played like two young ravens on the crags :
 Then they could write, ay, and speak too, as well,
 As many of their betters—and for Leonard ! 280
 The very night before he went away,
 In my own house I put into his hand
 A Bible, and I'd wager house and field
 That, if he be alive, he has it yet.

Leonard. It seems, these Brothers have not lived to be

A comfort to each other—

Priest. That they might

Live to such end is what both old and young

In this our valley all of us have wished,

And what, for my part, I have often prayed : 289

But Leonard—

Leonard. Then James still is left among you !

Priest. 'Tis of the elder brother I am speaking :

They had an uncle ;—he was at that time

A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas :

And, but for that same uncle, to this hour

Leonard had never handled rope or shroud :

For the boy loved the life which we lead here ;

And though of unripe years, a stripling only,

His soul was knit to this his native soil.

But, as I said, old Walter was too weak

To strive with such a torrent ; when he died, 300

The estate and house were sold ; and all their sheep,

A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,

Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years :—

Well—all was gone, and they were destitute,

And Leonard, chiefly for his Brother's sake,

Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.

Twelve years are past since we had tidings from him.

If there were one among us who had heard

That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,

From the Great Gavel,¹ down by Leeza's banks, 310

And down the Enna, far as Egremont,

The day would be a joyous festival ;

And those two bells of ours, which there you see—

Hanging in the open air—but, O good Sir !

¹ The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale : on issuing from the Lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont.

This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him—
 Living or dead.—When last we heard of him,
 He was in slavery among the Moors
 Upon the Barbary coast.—'Twas not a little
 That would bring down his spirit ; and no doubt,
 Before it ended in his death, the Youth 320
 Was sadly crossed.—Poor Leonard ! when we parted,
 He took me by the hand, and said to me,
 If e'er he should grow rich, he would return,
 To live in peace upon his father's land,
 And lay his bones among us.

Leonard. If that day
 Should come, 'twould needs be a glad day for him ;
 He would himself, no doubt, be happy then
 As any that should meet him—

Priest. Happy ! Sir—

Leonard. You said his kindred all were in their
 graves,
 And that he had one Brother—

Priest. That is but 330
 A fellow-tale of sorrow. From his youth
 James, though not sickly, yet was delicate ;
 And Leonard being always by his side
 Had done so many offices about him,
 That, though he was not of a timid nature,
 Yet still the spirit of a mountain-boy
 In him was somewhat checked ; and, when his Brother
 Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
 The little colour that he had was soon
 Stolen from his cheek ; he drooped, and pined, and
 pined— 340

Leonard. But these are all the graves of full-grown
 men !

Priest. Ay, Sir, that passed away : we took him
 to us ;
 He was the child of all the dale—he lived
 Three months with one, and six months with another ;
 And wanted neither food, nor clothes, nor love ;
 And many, many happy days were his.
 But, whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief

His absent Brother still was at his heart.
 And, when he dwelt beneath our roof, we found
 (A practice till this time unknown to him) 350
 That often, rising from his bed at night,
 He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping
 He sought his brother Leonard.—You are moved !
 Forgive me, Sir : before I spoke to you,
 I judged you most unkindly.

Leonard. But this Youth,
 How did he die at last ?

Priest. One sweet May-morning,
 (It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)
 He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,
 With two or three companions, whom their course
 Of occupation led from height to height 360
 Under a cloudless sun—till he, at length,
 Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge
 The humour of the moment, lagged behind.
 You see yon precipice ;—it wears the shape
 Of a vast building made of many crags ;
 And in the midst is one particular rock
 That rises like a column from the vale,
 Whence by our shepherds it is called THE PILLAR.
 Upon its aëry summit crowned with heath,
 The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades, 370
 Lay stretched at ease ; but, passing by the place
 On their return, they found that he was gone.
 No ill was feared ; till one of them by chance
 Entering, when evening was far spent, the house
 Which at that time was James's home, there learned
 That nobody had seen him all that day :
 The morning came, and still he was unheard of :
 The neighbours were alarmed, and to the brook
 Some hastened ; some ran to the lake : ere noon
 They found him at the foot of that same rock 380
 Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after
 I buried him, poor Youth, and there he lies !

Leonard. And that then is his grave !—Before his
 death
 You say that he saw many happy years ?

44 POEMS FOUNDED ON THE AFFECTIONS

Priest. Ay, that he did—

Leonard. And all went well with him ?—

Priest. If he had one, the Youth had twenty homes.

Leonard. And you believe, then, that his mind was easy ?—

Priest. Yes, long before he died, he found that time
Is a true friend to sorrow ; and, unless

His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless
fortune, 390

He talked about him with a cheerful love.

Leonard. He could not come to an unhallowed end !

Priest. Nay, God forbid !—You recollect I mentioned
A habit which disquietude and grief

Had brought upon him ; and we all conjectured

That, as the day was warm, he had lain down

On the soft heath,—and, waiting for his comrades,

He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep

He to the margin of the precipice 399

Had walked, and from the summit had fallen headlong :

And so no doubt he perished. When the Youth

Fell, in his hand he must have grasped, we think,

His shepherd's staff ; for on that Pillar of rock

It had been caught mid-way ; and there for years

It hung ;—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended—

The Stranger would have thanked him, but he felt

A gushing from his heart, that took away

The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence ;

And Leonard, when they reached the church-yard gate,

As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned round,— 410

And, looking at the grave, he said, " My Brother !"

The Vicar did not hear the words : and now

He pointed towards his dwelling-place, entreating

That Leonard would partake his homely fare :

The other thanked him with an earnest voice ;

But added, that, the evening being calm,

He would pursue his journey. So they parted.

It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove

That overhung the road : he there stopped short,

And, sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed 420
 All that the Priest had said : his early years
 Were with him :—his long absence, cherished hopes,
 And thoughts which had been his an hour before,
 All pressed on him with such a weight, that now,
 This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed
 A place in which he could not bear to live :
 So he relinquished all his purposes.
 He travelled back to Egremont : and thence,
 That night, he wrote a letter to the Priest,
 Reminding him of what had passed between them ;
 And adding, with a hope to be forgiven, 431
 That it was from the weakness of his heart
 He had not dared to tell him who he was.
 This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
 A seaman, a grey-headed Mariner.

TO A BUTTERFLY

I'VE watched you now a full half-hour,
 Self-poised upon that yellow flower ;
 And, little Butterfly ! indeed
 I know not if you sleep or feed.
 How motionless !—not frozen seas
 More motionless ! and then
 What joy awaits you, when the breeze
 Hath found you out among the trees,
 And calls you forth again !

This plot of orchard-ground is ours ; 10
 My trees they are, my Sister's flowers ;
 Here rest your wings when they are weary ;
 Here lodge as in a sanctuary !
 Come often to us, fear no wrong ;
 Sit near us on the bough !
 We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
 And summer days, when we were young ;
 Sweet childish days, that were as long
 As twenty days are now. 19

A FAREWELL

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-ground,
 Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
 Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
 One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare ;
 Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
 The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
 Farewell !—we leave thee to Heaven's peaceful care,
 Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
 And there will safely ride when we are gone ;
 The flowering shrubs that deck our humble door
 Will prosper, though untended and alone :
 Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none :
 These narrow bounds contain our private store
 Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon ;
 Here are they in our sight—we have no more.

10

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell !
 For two months now in vain we shall be sought ;
 We leave you here in solitude to dwell
 With these our latest gifts of tender thought ;
 Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,
 Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, farewell !
 Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,
 And placed together near our rocky Well.

20

We go for One to whom ye will be dear ;
 And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,
 Our own contrivance, Building without peer !
 —A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,
 Whose pleasures are in wild fields gathered,
 With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer,
 Will come to you ; to you herself will wed ;
 And love the blessed life that we lead here.

30

Dear Spot ! which we have watched with tender heed,
Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown
Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
Making all kindness registered and known ;
Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child indeed,
Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need. 40

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,
That hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost show
To them who look not daily on thy face ;
Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
And say'st, when we forsake thee, " Let them go !"
Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race
Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,
And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone by,
And this sweet spring, the best beloved and best ; 50
Joy will be flown in its mortality ;
Something must stay to tell us of the rest.
Here, thronged with primroses, the steep rock's breast
Glittered at evening like a starry sky ;
And in this bush our sparrow built her nest,
Of which I sang one song that will not die.

O happy Garden ! whose seclusion deep
Hath been so friendly to industrious hours ;
And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers, 6
And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers ;
Two burning months let summer overleap,
And, coming back with Her who will be ours,
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN MY POCKET-COPY OF THOMSON'S "CASTLE
OF INDOLENCE."

WITHIN our happy Castle there dwelt One
Whom without blame I may not overlook ;
For never sun on living creature shone
Who more devout enjoyment with us took :
Here on his hours he hung as on a book,
On his own time here would he float away,
As doth a fly upon a summer brook ;
But go to-morrow, or belike to-day,
Seek for him,—he is fled ; and whither none can say.

Thus often would he leave our peaceful home, 10
And find elsewhere his business or delight ;
Out of our Valley's limits did he roam :
Full many a time, upon a stormy night,
His voice came to us from the neighbouring height :
Oft could we see him driving full in view
At mid-day when the sun was shining bright ;
What ill was on him, what he had to do,
A mighty wonder bred among our quiet crew.

Ah ! piteous sight it was to see this Man
When he came back to us, a withered flower,— 20
Or like a sinful creature, pale and wan.
Down would he sit ; and without strength or power
Look at the common grass from hour to hour :
And oftentimes, how long I fear to say,
Where apple-trees in blossom made a bower,
Retired in that sunshiny shade he lay ;
And, like a naked Indian, slept himself away.

Great wonder to our gentle tribe it was
Whenever from our Valley he withdrew ;
For happier soul no living creature has 30
Than he had, being here the long day through.

Some thought he was a lover, and did woo :
Some thought far worse of him, and judged him wrong ;
But verse was what he had been wedded to ;
And his own mind did like a tempest strong
Come to him thus, and drove the weary Wight along.

With him there often walked in friendly guise,
Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,
A noticeable Man with large grey eyes,
And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly 40
As if a blooming face it ought to be ;
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy ;
Profound his forehead was, though not severe ;
Yet some did think that he had little business here :

Sweet heaven forefend ! his was a lawful right ;
Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy ;
His limbs would toss about him with delight,
Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy.
Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy 50
To banish listlessness and irksome care ;
He would have taught you how you might employ
Yourself ; and many did to him repair,—
And certes not in vain ; he had inventions rare.

Expedients, too, of simplest sort he tried :
Long blades of grass, plucked round him as he lay,
Made, to his ear attentively applied,
A pipe on which the wind would deftly play ;
Glasses he had, that little things display,
The beetle panoplied in gems and gold, 60
A mailed angel on a battle-day ;
The mysteries that cups of flowers enfold,
And all the gorgeous sights which fairies do behold.

He would entice that other Man to hear
His music, and to view his imagery :
And, sooth, these two were each to the other dear :
No livelier love in such a place could be :

There did they dwell—from earthly labour free,
 As happy spirits as were ever seen ;
 If but a bird, to keep them company, 70
 Or butterfly sate down, they were, I ween,
 As pleased as if the same had been a Maiden-queen.

LOUISA

AFTER ACCOMPANYING HER ON A MOUNTAIN EXCURSION.

I MET Louisa in the shade,
 And, having seen that lovely Maid,
 Why should I fear to say
 That, nymph-like, she is fleet and strong,
 And down the rocks can leap along
 Like rivulets in May ?

And she hath smiles to earth unknown ;
 Smiles, that with motion of their own
 Do spread, and sink, and rise ;
 That come and go with endless play, 10
 And ever, as they pass away,
 Are hidden in her eyes.

She loves her fire, her cottage-home ;
 Yet o'er the moorland will she roam
 In weather rough and bleak ;
 And, when against the wind she strains,
 Oh ! might I kiss the mountain rains
 That sparkle on her cheek.

Take all that's mine " beneath the moon,"
 If I with her but half a noon 20
 May sit beneath the walls
 Of some old cave, or mossy nook,
 When up she winds along the brook
 To hunt the waterfalls.

STRANGE fits of passion have I known ;
And I will dare to tell,
But in the Lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved looked every day
Fresh as a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath an evening-moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea ;
With quickening pace my horse drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

10

And now we reached the orchard-plot ;
And, as we climbed the hill,
The sinking moon to Lucy's cot
Came near, and nearer still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

20

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped :
When down behind the cottage roof,
At once, the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a Lover's head !
" O mercy !" to myself I cried,
" If Lucy should be dead !"

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A Maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love :

A violet by a mossy stone
 Half hidden from the eye !
 —Fair as a star, when only one
 Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
 When Lucy ceased to be ;
 But she is in her grave, and, oh,
 The difference to me !

10

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
 In lands beyond the sea ;
 Nor, England ! did I know till then
 What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !
 Nor will I quit thy shore
 A second time ; for still I seem
 To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
 The joy of my desire ;
 And she I cherished turned her wheel
 Beside an English fire.

10

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed,
 The bowers where Lucy played ;
 And thine too is the last green field
 That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

ERE with cold beads of midnight dew
 Had mingled tears of thine,
 I grieved, fond Youth ! that thou shouldst sue
 To haughty Geraldine.

Immoveable by generous sighs,
 She glories in a train
 Who drag, beneath our native skies,
 An Oriental chain.

There are many things in the world
 Which are not in the world
 There are many things in the world
 Which are not in the world

There are many things in the world
 Which are not in the world
 There are many things in the world
 Which are not in the world

There are many things in the world
 Which are not in the world
 There are many things in the world
 Which are not in the world

THE LITTLE BOOK OF THE LITTLE

There is the life of human beings,
 Which now is the life of the world
 There is the life of human beings,
 Which now is the life of the world

There is the life of human beings,
 Which now is the life of the world
 There is the life of human beings,
 Which now is the life of the world

There is the life of human beings,
 Which now is the life of the world
 There is the life of human beings,
 Which now is the life of the world

Then shall love teach some virtuous Youth
 "To draw, out of the object of his eyes," 20
 The while on thee they gaze in simple truth,
 Hues more exalted, "a refinèd Form,"
 That dreads not age, nor suffers from the worm,
 And never dies.

THE FORSAKEN

THE peace which others seek they find;
 The heaviest storms not longest last;
 Heaven grants even to the guiltiest mind
 An amnesty for what is past;
 When will my sentence be reversed?
 I only pray to know the worst;
 And wish, as if my heart would burst.

O weary struggle! silent years
 Tell seemingly no doubtful tale;
 And yet they leave it short, and fears 10
 And hopes are strong and will prevail.
 My calmest faith escapes not pain;
 And, feeling that the hope is vain,
 I think that he will come again.

'Tis said that some have died for love:
 And here and there a church-yard grave is found
 In the cold north's unhallowed ground,
 Because the wretched man himself had slain,
 His love was such a grievous pain.
 And there is one whom I five years have known;
 He dwells alone
 Upon Helvellyn's side:
 He loved—the pretty Barbara died;
 And thus he makes his moan: 10
 Three years had Barbara in her grave been laid
 When thus his moan he made:

" Oh, move, thou Cottage, from behind that oak !
 Or let the aged tree uprooted lie,
 That in some other way yon smoke
 May mount into the sky !
 The clouds pass on ; they from the heavens depart :
 I look—the sky is empty space ;
 I know not what I trace ;
 But when I cease to look, my hand is on my heart. 20

" O ! what a weight is in these shades ! Ye leaves,
 That murmur once so dear, when will it cease ?
 Your sound my heart of rest bereaves,
 It robs my heart of peace.
 Thou Thrush, that singest loud—and loud and free,
 Into yon row of willows flit,
 Upon that alder sit ;
 Or sing another song, or choose another tree.

" Roll back, sweet Rill ! back to thy mountain-bounds,
 And there for ever be thy waters chained ! 30
 For thou dost haunt the air with sounds
 That cannot be sustained ;
 If still beneath that pine-tree's ragged bough
 Headlong yon waterfall must come,
 Oh let it then be dumb !
 Be anything, sweet Rill, but that which thou art now.

" Thou Eglantine, so bright with sunny showers,
 Proud as a rainbow spanning half the vale,
 Thou one fair shrub, oh ! shed thy flowers,
 And stir not in the gale. 40
 For thus to see thee nodding in the air,
 To see thy arch thus stretch and bend,
 Thus rise and thus descend,—
 Disturbs me till the sight is more than I can bear."

The Man who makes this feverish complaint
 Is one of giant stature, who could dance
 Equipped from head to foot in iron mail.
 Ah gentle Love ! if ever thought was thine

To store up kindred hours for me, thy face
 Turn from me, gentle Love ! nor let me walk 50
 Within the sound of Emma's voice, nor know
 Such happiness as I have known to-day.

A COMPLAINT

THERE is a change—and I am poor ;
 Your love hath been, nor long ago,
 A fountain at my fond heart's door,
 Whose only business was to flow ;
 And flow it did ; not taking heed
 Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count :
 Blest was I then all bliss above !
 Now, for that consecrated fount
 Of murmuring, sparkling, living love, 10
 What have I ? shall I dare to tell ?
 A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—
 I trust it is,—and never dry :
 What matter ? if the waters sleep
 In silence and obscurity.
 —Such change, and at the very door
 Of my fond heart, hath made me poor. 18

TO ———

LET other bards of angels sing,
 Bright suns without a spot ;
 But thou art no such perfect thing :
 Rejoice that thou art not !

Heed not tho' none should call thee fair ;
 So, Mary, let it be
 If nought in loveliness compare
 With what thou art to me.

True beauty dwells in deep retreats,
Whose veil is unremoved
Till heart with heart in concord beats.
And the lover is beloved.

10

YES ! thou art fair, yet be not moved
To scorn the declaration,
That sometimes I in thee have loved
My fancy's own creation.

Imagination needs must stir ;
Dear Maid, this truth believe,
Minds that have nothing to confer
Find little to perceive.

Be pleased that nature made thee fit
To feed my heart's devotion,
By laws to which all Forms submit
In sky, air, earth, and ocean.

10

How rich that forehead's calm expanse !
How bright that heaven-directed glance !
—Waft her to glory, wingèd Powers,
Ere sorrow be renewed,
And intercourse with mortal hours
Bring back a humbler mood !
So looked Cecilia when she drew
An Angel from his station ;
So looked ; not ceasing to pursue
Her tuneful adoration !

10

But hand and voice alike are still ;
No sound *here* sweeps away the will
That gave it birth : in service meek
One upright arm sustains the cheek,
And one across the bosom lies—
That rose, and now forgets to rise,

Subdued by breathless harmonies
 Of meditative feeling ;
 Mute strains from worlds beyond the skies,
 Through the pure light of female eyes 20
 Their sanctity revealing !

WHAT heavenly smiles ! O Lady mine,
 Through my very heart they shine :
 And, if my brow gives back their light,
 Do thou look gladly on the sight ;
 As the clear Moon with modest pride
 Beholds her own bright beams
 Reflected from the mountain's side
 And from the headlong streams. 8

TO ———

O DEARER far than light and life are dear,
 Full oft our human foresight I deplore ;
 Trembling, through my unworthiness, with fear
 That friends, by death disjoined, may meet no more !

Misgivings, hard to vanquish or control,
 Mix with the day, and cross the hour of rest ;
 While all the future, for thy purer soul,
 With "sober certainties" of love is blest.

That sigh of thine, not meant for human ear,
 Tells that these words thy humbleness offend ; 10
 Yet bear me up—else faltering in the rear
 Of a steep march : support me to the end.

Peace settles where the intellect is meek,
 And Love is dutiful in thought and deed ;
 Through Thee communion with that Love I seek :
 The faith Heaven strengthens where *he* moulds the
 Creed.

THE COMPLAINT

OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN.

[When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he be unable to follow, or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert, unless he should have the good fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work Hearne's "Journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean." In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the northern lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.]

I.

BEFORE I see another day,
 Oh let my body die away !
 In sleep I heard the northern gleams ;
 The stars, they were among my dreams ;
 In rustling conflict through the skies,
 I heard, I saw the flashes drive,
 And yet they are upon my eyes,
 And yet I am alive ;
 Before I see another day,
 Oh let my body die away !

10

II.

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;
 Yet is it dead, and I remain :
 All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;
 And they are dead, and I will die.
 When I was well, I wished to live,
 For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire ;
 But they to me no joy can give,
 No pleasure now, and no desire.
 Then here contented will I lie !
 Alone, I cannot fear to die.

20

III.

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on
 Another day, a single one !
 Too soon I yielded to despair ;
 Why did ye listen to my prayer ?
 When ye were gone my limbs were stronger ;
 And oh, how grievously I rue,
 That, afterwards, a little longer,
 My friends, I did not follow you !
 For strong and without pain I lay,
 Dear friends, when ye were gone away.

30

IV.

My Child ! they gave thee to another,
 A woman who was not thy mother.
 When from my arms my Babe they took,
 On me how strangely did he look !
 Through his whole body something ran,
 A most strange working did I see ;
 —As if he strove to be a man,
 That he might pull the sledge for me :
 And then he stretched his arms, how wild !
 Oh mercy ! like a helpless child.

40

V.

My little joy ! my little pride !
 In two days more I must have died.
 Then do not weep and grieve for me ;
 I feel I must have died with thee.
 O wind, that o'er my head art flying
 The way my friends their course did bend,
 I should not feel the pain of dying,
 Could I with thee a message send ;
 Too soon, my friends, ye went away ;
 For I had many things to say.

50

VI.

I'll follow you across the snow ;
Ye travel heavily and slow ;
In spite of all my weary pain
I'll look upon your tents again.
—My fire is dead, and snowy white
The water which beside it stood :
The wolf has come to me to-night,
And he has stolen away my food.
For ever left alone am I ;
Then wherefore should I fear to die ? 60

VII.

Young as I am, my course is run,
I shall not see another sun ;
I cannot lift my limbs to know
If they have any life or no.
My poor forsaken Child, if I
For once could have thee close to me,
With happy heart I then would die,
And my last thought would happy be ;
But thou, dear Babe, art far away,
Nor shall I see another day. 70

THE LAST OF THE FLOCK

I.

IN distant countries have I been,
And yet I have not often seen
A healthy man, a man full grown,
Weep in the public roads, alone.
But such a one, on English ground,
And in the broad highway, I met ;
Along the broad highway he came,
His cheeks with tears were wet :
Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad ;
And in his arms a Lamb he had. 10

II.

He saw me, and he turned aside,
 As if he wished himself to hide :
 And with his coat did then essay
 To wipe those briny tears away.
 I followed him, and said, " My friend,
 What ails you ? wherefore weep you so ?"
 —" Shame on me, Sir ! this lusty Lamb,
 He makes my tears to flow.
 To-day I fetched him from the rock ;
 He is the last of all my flock.

20

III.

" When I was young, a single man,
 And after youthful follies ran,
 Though little given to care and thought,
 Yet, so it was, an ewe I bought ;
 And other sheep from her I raised,
 As healthy sheep as you might see ;
 And then I married, and was rich
 As I could wish to be ;
 Of sheep I numbered a full score.
 And every year increased my store.

30

IV.

" Year after year my stock it grew ;
 And from this one, this single ewe,
 Full fifty comely sheep I raised,
 As fine a flock as ever grazed !
 Upon the Quantock hills they fed ;
 They throve, and we at home did thrive :
 —This lusty Lamb of all my store
 Is all that is alive ;
 And now I care not if we die,
 And perish all of poverty.

40

V.

“ Six Children, Sir ! had I to feed ;
Hard labour in a time of need !
My pride was tamed, and in our grief
I of the Parish asked relief.
They said I was a wealthy man ;
My sheep upon the uplands fed,
And it was fit that thence I took
Whereof to buy us bread.
‘ Do this : how can we give to you,’
They cried, ‘ what to the poor is due ?’

50

VI.

“ I sold a sheep, as they had said,
And bought my little children bread,
And they were healthy with their food ;
For me—it never did me good.
A woeful time it was for me,
To see the end of all my gains,
The pretty flock which I had reared
With all my care and pains,
To see it melt like snow away—
For me it was a woeful day.

60

VII.

“ Another still ! and still another !
A little lamb, and then its mother !
It was a vein that never stopped—
Like blood-drops from my heart they dropped.
Till thirty were not left alive
They dwindled, dwindled, one by one ;
And I may say, that many a time
I wished they all were gone—
Reckless of what might come at last
Were but the bitter struggle past.

70

VIII.

"To wicked deeds I was inclined,
 And wicked fancies crossed my mind;
 And every man I chanced to see,
 I thought he knew some ill of me:
 No peace, no comfort could I find,
 No ease, within doors or without;
 And crazily and wearily
 I went my work about;
 And oft was moved to flee from home,
 And hide my head where wild beasts roam. 80

IX.

"Sir! 'twas a precious flock to me,
 As dear as my own children be;
 For daily with my growing store
 I loved my children more and more.
 Alas! it was an evil time;
 God cursed me in my sore distress;
 I prayed, yet every day I thought
 I loved my children less;
 And every week, and every day,
 My flock it seemed to melt away. 90

X.

"They dwindled, Sir, sad sight to see!
 From ten to five, from five to three,
 A lamb, a wether, and a ewe;—
 And then at last from three to two;
 And, of my fifty, yesterday
 I had but only one:
 And here it lies upon my arm,
 Alas! and I have none;—
 To-day I fetched it from the rock;
 It is the last of all my flock." 100

THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET —

I.

WHERE art thou, my beloved Son,
 Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?
 Oh find me, prosperous or undone !
 Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
 Why am I ignorant of the same
 That I may rest ; and neither blame
 Nor sorrow may attend thy name ?

II.

Seven years, alas ! to have received
 No tidings of an only child ;
 To have despaired, have hoped, believed, 10
 And been for evermore beguiled ;
 Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss !
 I catch at them, and then I miss ;
 Was ever darkness like to this ?

III.

He was among the prime in worth,
 An object beauteous to behold ;
 Well born, well bred ; I sent him forth
 Ingenuous, innocent, and bold :
 If things ensued that wanted grace,
 As hath been said, they were not base ; 20
 And never blush was on my face.

IV.

Ah ! little doth the young-one dream,
 When full of play and childish cares,
 What power is in his wildest scream,
 Heard by his mother unawares !
 He knows it not, he cannot guess :
 Years to a mother bring distress ;
 But do not make her love the less.

V.

Neglect me ! no, I suffered long
 From that ill thought ; and, being blind, 30
 Said, " Pride shall help me in my wrong :
 Kind mother have I been, as kind
 As ever breathed : " and that is true ;
 I've wet my path with tears like dew,
 Weeping for him when no one knew.

VI.

My Son, if thou be humbled, poor,
 Hopeless of honour and of gain,
 Oh ! do not dread thy mother's door ;
 Think not of me with grief and pain :
 I now can see with better eyes ; 40
 And worldly grandeur I despise,
 And fortune with her gifts and lies.

VII.

Alas ! the fowls of heaven have wings,
 And blasts of heaven will aid their flight ;
 They mount—how short a voyage brings
 The wanderers back to their delight !
 Chains tie us down by land and sea ;
 And wishes, vain as mine, may be
 All that is left to comfort thee.

VIII.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan, 50
 Maimed, mangled by inhuman men ;
 Or thou upon a desert thrown
 Inheritest the lion's den ;
 Or hast been summoned to the deep,
 Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
 An incommunicable sleep.

IX.

I look for ghosts ; but none will force
Their way to me : 'tis falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead ;
For, surely, then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night,
With love and longings infinite.

60

X.

My apprehensions come in crowds ;
I dread the rustling of the grass ;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass :
I question things and do not find
One that will answer to my mind ;
And all the world appears unkind.

70

XI.

Beyond participation lie
My troubles, and beyond relief :
If any chance to heave a sigh,
They pity me, and not my grief.
Then come to me, my Son, or send
Some tidings that my woes may end ;
I have no other earthly friend !

77

THE SAILOR'S MOTHER

ONE morning (raw it was and wet—
A foggy day in winter time)
A Woman on the road I met,
Not old, though something past her prime :
Majestic in her person, tall and straight ;
And like a Roman matron's was her mien and gait.

The ancient spirit is not dead ;
 Old times, thought I, are breathing there ;
 Proud was I that my country bred
 Such strength, a dignity so fair : 10
 She begged an alms, like one in poor estate ;
 I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate.

When from these lofty thoughts I woke,
 "What is it," said I, "that you bear,
 Beneath the covert of your Cloak,
 Protected from this cold damp air ?"
 She answered, soon as she the question heard,
 "A simple burthen, Sir, a little Singing-bird."

And, thus continuing, she said,
 "I had a Son, who many a day 20
 Sailed on the seas, but he is dead ;
 In Denmark he was cast away :
 And I have travelled weary miles to see
 If aught which he had owned might still remain for me.

"The bird and cage they both were his :
 'Twas my Son's bird ; and neat and trim
 He kept it : many voyages
 The singing-bird had gone with him ;
 When last he sailed, he left the bird behind ;
 From bodings, as might be, that hung upon his 30
 mind.

"He to a fellow-lodger's care
 Had left it, to be watched and fed,
 And pipe its song in safety ;—there
 I found it when my Son was dead ;
 And now, God help me for my little wit !
 I bear it with me, Sir ;—he took so much delight
 in it." 36

THE CHILDLESS FATHER

"UP, Timothy, up with your staff and away !
Not a soul in the village this morning will stay ;
The hare has just started from Hamilton's grounds,
And Skiddaw is glad with the cry of the hounds."

—Of coats and of jackets grey, scarlet, and green,
On the slopes of the pastures all colours were seen ;
With their comely blue aprons, and caps white as
snow,
The girls on the hills made a holiday show.

Fresh sprigs of green box-wood, not six months before,
Filled the funeral basin¹ at Timothy's door ; 10
A coffin through Timothy's threshold had past ;
One Child did it bear, and that Child was his last.

Now fast up the dell came the noise and the fray,
The horse, and the horn, and the hark ! hark away !
Old Timothy took up his staff, and he shut
With a leisurely motion the door of his hut.

Perhaps to himself at that moment he said ;
"The key I must take, for my Ellen is dead."
But of this in my ears not a word did he speak ;
And he went to the chase with a tear on his cheek. 20

THE EMIGRANT MOTHER

ONCE in a lonely hamlet I sojourned
In which a Lady driven from France did dwell ;
The big and lesser griefs with which she mourned
In friendship she to me would often tell.

¹ In several parts of the North of England, when a funeral takes place, a basin full of sprigs of box-wood is placed at the door of the house from which the coffin is taken up, and each person who attends the funeral ordinarily takes a sprig of this box-wood, and throws it into the grave of the deceased.

This Lady, dwelling upon British ground,
 Where she was childless, daily would repair
 To a poor neighbouring cottage ; as I found,
 For sake of a young Child whose home was there.

Once having seen her clasp with fond embrace
 This Child, I chanted to myself a lay, 10
 Endeavouring, in our English tongue, to trace
 Such things as she unto the Babe might say :
 And thus, from what I heard and knew, or
 guessed,
 My song the workings of her heart expressed.

I.

“ Dear Babe, thou daughter of another,
 One moment let me be thy mother !
 An infant’s face and looks are thine
 And sure a mother’s heart is mine :
 Thy own dear mother’s far away,
 At labour in the harvest field : 20
 Thy little sister is at play ;—
 What warmth, what comfort would it yield
 To my poor heart, if thou wouldst be
 One little hour a child to me !

II.

“ Across the waters I am come,
 And I have left a babe at home :
 A long, long way of land and sea !
 Come to me—I’m no enemy :
 I am the same who at thy side
 Sate yesterday, and made a nest 30
 For thee, sweet Baby !—thou hast tried,
 Thou know’st the pillow of my breast ;
 Good, good art thou :—alas ! to me
 Far more than I can be to thee.

III.

“ Here, little Darling, dost thou lie ;
An infant thou, a mother I !
Mine wilt thou be, thou hast no fears ;
Mine art thou—spite of these my tears.
Alas ! before I left the spot,
My baby and its dwelling-place, 40
The nurse said to me, ‘ Tears should not
Be shed upon an infant’s face,
It was unlucky ’—no, no, no ;
No truth is in them who say so !

IV.

“ My own dear Little-one will sigh,
Sweet Babe ! and they will let him die.
‘ He pines,’ they’ll say, ‘ it is his doom,
And you may see his hour is come.’
Oh ! had he but thy cheerful smiles,
Limbs stout as thine, and lips as gay, 50
Thy looks, thy cunning, and thy wiles,
And countenance like a summer’s day,
They would have hopes of him ;—and then
I should behold his face again !

V.

“ ’Tis gone—like dreams that we forget ;
There was a smile or two—yet—yet
I can remember them, I see
The smiles, worth all the world to me.
Dear Baby ! I must lay thee down ;
Thou troublest me with strange alarms ; 50
Smiles hast thou, bright ones of thy own ;
I cannot keep thee in my arms ;
For they confound me ;—where—where is
That last, that sweetest smile of his ?

VI.

" Oh ! how I love thee !—we will stay
 Together here this one half day.
 My sister's child, who bears my name,
 From France to sheltering England came ;
 She with her mother crossed the sea ;
 The babe and mother near me dwell : 70
 Yet does my yearning heart to thee
 Turn rather, though I love her well :
 Rest, little Stranger, rest thee here !
 Never was any child more dear !

VII.

" —I cannot help it ; ill intent
 I've none, my pretty Innocent !
 I weep—I know they do thee wrong,
 These tears—and my poor idle tongue.
 Oh, what a kiss was that ! my cheek
 How cold it is ! but thou art good ; 80
 Thine eyes are on me—they would speak,
 I think, to help me if they could.
 Blessings upon that soft, warm face,
 My heart again is in its place !

VIII.

" While thou art mine, my little Love,
 This cannot be a sorrowful grove ;
 Contentment, hope, and mother's glee,
 I seem to find them all in thee :
 Here's grass to play with, here are flowers ;
 I'll call thee by my darling's name ; 90
 Thou hast, I think, a look of ours,
 Thy features seem to me the same ;
 His little sister thou shalt be ;
 And, when once more my home I see,
 I'll tell him many tales of Thee."

THE IDIOT BOY

'Tis eight o'clock,—a clear March night,
 The moon is up,—the sky is blue,
 The owlet, in the moonlight air,
 Shouts from nobody knows where ;
 He lengthens out his lonely shout,
 Halloo ! halloo ! a long halloo !

—Why bustle thus about your door,
 What means this bustle, Betty Foy ?
 Why are you in this mighty fret ?
 And why on horseback have you set
 Him whom you love, your Idiot Boy ?

10

Scarcely a soul is out of bed ;
 Good Betty, put him down again ;
 His lips with joy they burr at you ;
 But, Betty ! what has he to do
 With stirrup, saddle, or with rein ?

But Betty's bent on her intent ;
 For her good neighbour Susan Gale,
 Old Susan, she who dwells alone,
 Is sick, and makes a piteous moan,
 As if her very life would fail.

20

There's not a house within a mile,
 No hand to help them in distress ;
 Old Susan lies a-bed in pain,
 And sorely puzzled are the twain,
 For what she ails they cannot guess.

And Betty's husband's at the wood,
 Where by the week he doth abide,
 A woodman in the distant vale ;
 There's none to help poor Susan Gale ;
 What must be done ? what will betide ?

30

And Betty from the lane has fetched
 Her Pony, that is mild and good ;
 Whether he be in joy or pain,
 Feeding at will along the lane,
 Or bringing faggots from the wood.

And he is all in travelling trim,—
 And, by the moonlight, Betty Foy
 Has on the well-girt saddle set
 (The like was never heard of yet)
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

40

And he must post without delay
 Across the bridge and through the dale,
 And by the church, and o'er the down,
 To bring a Doctor from the town,
 Or she will die, old Susan Gale.

There is no need of boot or spur,
 There is no need of whip or wand ;
 For Johnny has his holly-bough,
 And with a *hurly-burly* now
 He shakes the green bough in his hand.

50

And Betty o'er and o'er has told
 The Boy, who is her best delight,
 Both what to follow, what to shun,
 What do, and what to leave undone,
 How turn to left, and how to right.

And Betty's most especial charge,
 Was, " Johnny ! Johnny ! mind that you
 Come home again, nor stop at all,—
 Come home again, whate'er befall,
 My Johnny, do, I pray you, do."

60

To this did Johnny answer make,
 Both with his head and with his hand,
 And proudly shook the bridle too ;
 And then ! his words were not a few,
 Which Betty well could understand.

And now that Johnny is just going,
Though Betty's in a mighty flurry,
She gently pats the Pony's side,
On which her Idiot Boy must ride, 70
And seems no longer in a hurry.

But when the Pony moved his legs,
Oh ! then for the poor Idiot Boy !
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,
For joy his head and heels are idle,
He's idle all for very joy.

And, while the Pony moves his legs,
In Johnny's left hand you may see
The green bough motionless and dead :
The Moon that shines above his head 80
Is not more still and mute than he.

His heart it was so full of glee
That till full fifty yards were gone,
He quite forgot his holly whip,
And all his skill in horsemanship :
Oh ! happy, happy, happy John.

And while the Mother, at the door,
Stands fixed, her face with joy o'erflows,
Proud of herself, and proud of him,
She sees him in his travelling trim, 90
How quietly her Johnny goes.

The silence of her Idiot Boy,
What hopes it sends to Betty's heart !
He's at the guide-post—he turns right ;
She watches till he's out of sight,
And Betty will not then depart.

Burr, burr—now Johnny's lips they burr,
As loud as any mill, or near it ;
Meek as a lamb the Pony moves,
And Johnny makes the noise he loves, 100
And Betty listens, glad to hear it.

Away she hies to Susan Gale :
 Her Messenger's in merry tune ;
 The owlets hoot, the owlets curr,
 And Johnny's lips they burr, burr, burr,
 As on he goes beneath the moon.

His steed and he right well agree ;
 For of this Pony there's a rumour
 That, should he lose his eyes and ears,
 And should he live a thousand years, 110
 He never will be out of humour.

But then he is a horse that thinks !
 And, when he thinks, his pace is slack ;
 Now, though he knows poor Johnny well,
 Yet, for his life, he cannot tell
 What he has got upon his back.

So through the moonlight lanes they go,
 And far into the moonlight dale,
 And by the church, and o'er the down,
 To bring a Doctor from the town, 120
 To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And Betty, now at Susan's side,
 Is in the middle of her story,
 What speedy help her Boy will bring,
 With many a most diverting thing,
 Of Johnny's wit, and Johnny's glory.

And Betty, still at Susan's side,
 By this time is not quite so flurried :
 Demure with porringer and plate
 She sits, as if in Susan's fate 130
 Her life and soul were buried.

But Betty, poor good woman ! she,
 You plainly in her face may read it,
 Could lend out of that moment's store
 Five years of happiness or more
 To any that might need it.

But yet I guess that now and then
With Betty all was not so well ;
And to the road she turns her ears,
And thence full many a sound she hears, 140
Which she to Susan will not tell.

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;
" As sure as there's a moon in heaven,"
Cries Betty, " he'll be back again ;
They'll both be here—'tis almost ten—
Both will be here before eleven."

Poor Susan moans, poor Susan groans ;
The clock gives warning for eleven ;
'Tis on the stroke—" He must be near,"
Quoth Betty, " and will soon be here, 150
As sure as there's a moon in heaven."

The clock is on the stroke of twelve,
And Johnny is not yet in sight :
—The Moon's in heaven, as Betty sees,
But Betty is not quite at ease ;
And Susan has a dreadful night.

And Betty, half an hour ago,
On Johnny vile reflections cast :
" A little idle sauntering Thing !"
With other names, an endless string ; 160
But now that time is gone and past.

And Betty's drooping at the heart,
That happy time all past and gone,
" How can it be he is so late ?
The Doctor, he has made him wait ;
Susan ! they'll both be here anon."

And Susan's growing worse and worse,
And Betty's in a sad *quandary* ;
And then there's nobody to say
If she must go, or she must stay ! 170
—She's in a sad *quandary*.

The clock is on the stroke of one ;
 But neither Doctor nor his Guide
 Appears along the moonlight road ;
 There's neither horse nor man abroad,
 And Betty's still at Susan's side.

And Susan now begins to fear
 Of sad mischances not a few,
 That Johnny may perhaps be drowned ;
 Or lost, perhaps, and never found ; 180
 Which they must both for ever rue.

She prefaced half a hint of this
 With, " God forbid it should be true !"
 At the first word that Susan said
 Cried Betty, rising from the bed,
 " Susan, I'd gladly stay with you.

" I must be gone, I must away :
 Consider, Johnny's but half-wise ;
 Susan, we must take care of him,
 If he is hurt in life or limb " — 190
 " Oh God forbid !" poor Susan cries.

" What can I do ?" says Betty, going,
 " What can I do to ease your pain ?
 Good Susan tell me, and I'll stay ;
 I fear you're in a dreadful way,
 But I shall soon be back again."

" Nay, Betty, go ! good Betty, go !
 There's nothing that can ease my pain."
 Then off she hies ; but with a prayer,
 That God poor Susan's life would spare, 200
 Till she comes back again.

So, through the moonlight lane she goes,
 And far into the moonlight dale ;
 And how she ran, and how she walked,
 And all that to herself she talked,
 Would surely be a tedious tale.

In high and low, above, below,
In great and small, in round and square,
In tree and tower was Johnny seen,
In bush and brake, in black and green ; 210
'Twas Johnny, Johnny, everywhere.

And while she crossed the bridge, there came,
A thought with which her heart is sore—
Johnny perhaps his horse forsook,
To hunt the moon within the brook,
And never will be heard of more.

Now is she high upon the down,
Alone amid a prospect wide ;
There's neither Johnny nor his Horse
Among the fern or in the gorse ; 220
There's neither Doctor nor his Guide.

" Oh saints ! what is become of him ?
Perhaps he's climbed into an oak,
Where he will stay till he is dead ;
Or sadly he has been misled,
And joined the wandering gipsy-folk.

" Or him that wicked Pony's carried
To the dark cave, the goblin's hall ;
Or in the castle he's pursuing
Among the ghosts his own undoing ; 230
Or playing with the waterfall."

At poor old Susan then she railed,
While to the town she posts away ;
" If Susan had not been so ill,
Alas ! I should have had him still,
My Johnny, till my dying day."

Poor Betty, in this sad distemper,
The Doctor's self could hardly spare :
Unworthy things she talked, and wild ;
Even he, of cattle the most mild, 240
The Pony had his share.

But now she's fairly in the town,
 And to the Doctor's door she hies ;
 'Tis silence all on every side ;
 The town so long, the town so wide,
 Is silent as the skies.

And now she's at the Doctor's door,
 She lifts the knocker, rap, rap, rap ;
 The Doctor at the casement shows
 His glimmering eyes that peep and doze ! 250
 And one hand rubs his old night-cap.

" Oh Doctor ! Doctor ! where's my Johnny ?"
 " I'm here, what is 't you want with me ?"
 " Oh Sir ! you know I'm Betty Foy,
 And I have lost my poor dear Boy,
 You know him—him you often see ;

" He's not so wise as some folks be :"
 " The devil take his wisdom !" said
 The Doctor, looking somewhat grim,
 " What, Woman ! should I know of him ?"
 And, grumbling, he went back to bed ! 261

" O woe is me ! O woe is me !
 Here will I die ; here will I die ;
 I thought to find my lost one here,
 But he is neither far nor near,
 Oh ! what a wretched Mother I !"

She stops, she stands, she looks about ;
 Which way to turn she cannot tell.
 Poor Betty ! it would ease her pain
 If she had heart to knock again ; 270
 —The clock strikes three—a dismal knell !

Then up along the town she hies,
 No wonder if her senses fail ;
 This piteous news so much it shocked her,
 She quite forgot to send the Doctor,
 To comfort poor old Susan Gale.

And now she's high upon the down,
And she can see a mile of road :
" O cruel ! I'm almost threescore ;
Such night as this was ne'er before, 280
There's not a single soul abroad."

She listens, but she cannot hear
The foot of horse, the voice of man ;
The streams with softest sound are flowing,
The grass you almost hear it growing,
You hear it now, if e'er you can.

The owlets through the long blue night
Are shouting to each other still :
Fond lovers ! yet not quite hob nob,
They lengthen out the tremulous sob, 290
That echoes far from hill to hill.

Poor Betty now has lost all hope,
Her thoughts are bent on deadly sin,
A green-grown pond she just has past,
And from the brink she hurries fast,
Lest she should drown herself therein.

And now she sits her down and weeps ;
Such tears she never shed before ;
" Oh dear, dear Pony ! my sweet joy !
Oh carry back my Idiot Boy ! 300
And we will ne'er o'erload thee more."

A thought is come into her head :
The Pony he is mild and good,
And we have always used him well ;
Perhaps he's gone along the dell,
And carried Johnny to the wood.

Then up she springs as if on wings ;
She thinks no more of deadly sin ;
If Betty fifty ponds should see,
The last of all her thoughts would be 310
To drown herself therein.

Oh Reader ! now that I might tell
 What Johnny and his Horse are doing !
 What they've been doing all this time,
 Oh could I put it into rhyme,
 A most delightful tale pursuing !

Perhaps, and no unlikely thought !
 He with his Pony now doth roam
 The cliffs and peaks so high that are,
 To lay his hands upon a star, 320
 And in his pocket bring it home.

Perhaps he's turned himself about,
 His face unto his horse's tail,
 And, still and mute, in wonder lost,
 All silent as a horseman-ghost,
 He travels slowly down the vale.

And now, perhaps, is hunting sheep,
 A fierce and dreadful hunter he ;
 Yon valley, now so trim and green,
 In five months' time, should he be seen, 330
 A desert wilderness will be !

Perhaps, with head and heels on fire,
 And like the very soul of evil,
 He's galloping away, away,
 And so will gallop on for aye,
 The bane of all that dread the devil !

I to the Muses have been bound
 These fourteen years, by strong indentures :
 O gentle Muses ! let me tell
 But half of what to him befell ; 340
 He surely met with strange adventures.

O gentle Muses ! is this kind ?
 Why will ye thus my suit repel ?
 Why of your further aid bereave me ?
 And can ye thus unfriended leave me ;
 Ye Muses ! whom I love so well ?

Who's yon, that, near the waterfall,
Which thunders down with headlong force,
Beneath the moon, yet shining fair,
As careless as if nothing were, 350
Sits upright on a feeding horse ?

Unto his horse—there feeding free,
He seems, I think, the rein to give ;
Of moon or stars he takes no heed ;
Of such we in romances read :
—'Tis Johnny ! Johnny ! as I live.

And that's the very Pony, too !
Where is she, where is Betty Foy ?
She hardly can sustain her fears ;
The roaring waterfall she hears, 360
And cannot find her Idiot Boy.

Your Pony's worth his weight in gold :
Then calm your terrors, Betty Foy !
She's coming from among the trees,
And now all full in view she sees
Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy.

And Betty sees the Pony too :
Why stand you thus, good Betty Foy ?
It is no goblin, 'tis no ghost,
'Tis he whom you so long have lost, 370
He whom you love, your Idiot Boy.

She looks again—her arms are up—
She screams—she cannot move for joy ;
She darts, as with a torrent's force,
She almost has o'erturned the Horse,
And fast she holds her Idiot Boy.

And Johnny burrs, and laughs aloud ;
Whether in cunning or in joy
I cannot tell ; but, while he laughs,
Betty a drunken pleasure quaffs 380
To hear again her Idiot Boy.

And now she's at the Pony's tail,
 And now is at the Pony's head,—
 On that side now, and now on this ;
 And, almost stifled with her bliss,
 A few sad tears does Betty shed.

She kisses o'er and o'er again
 Him whom she loves, her Idiot Boy ;
 She's happy here, is happy there,
 She is uneasy everywhere ;
 Her limbs are all alive with joy.

390

She pats the Pony, where or when
 She knows not, happy Betty Foy !
 The little Pony glad may be,
 But he is milder far than she,
 You hardly can perceive his joy.

" Oh ! Johnny, never mind the Doctor ;
 You've done your best, and that is all :"
 She took the reins, when this was said,
 And gently turned the Pony's head
 From the loud waterfall.

400

By this the stars were almost gone,
 The moon was setting on the hill,
 So pale you scarcely looked at her :
 The little birds began to stir,
 Though yet their tongues were still.

The Pony, Betty, and her Boy,
 Wind slowly through the woody dale ;
 And who is she, betimes abroad,
 That hobbles up the steep rough road ?
 Who is it, but old Susan Gale ?

410

Long time lay Susan lost in thought ;
 And many dreadful fears beset her,
 Both for her Messenger and Nurse ;
 And, as her mind grew worse and worse,
 Her body—it grew better.

She turned, she tossed herself in bed,
On all sides doubts and terrors met her ;
Point after point did she discuss ;
And, while her mind was fighting thus, 420
Her body still grew better.

“ Alas ! what is become of them ?
These fears can never be endured ;
I'll to the wood.”—The word scarce said,
Did Susan rise up from her bed,
As if by magic cured.

Away she goes up hill and down,
And to the wood at length is come ;
She spies her Friends, she shouts a greeting ;
Oh me ! it is a merry meeting 430
As ever was in Christendom.

The owls have hardly sung their last,
While our four travellers homeward wend ;
The owls have hooted all night long,
And with the owls began my song,
And with the owls must end.

For, while they all were travelling home,
Cried Betty, “ Tell us, Johnny, do,
Where all this long night you have been,
What you have heard, what you have seen :
And, Johnny, mind you tell us true.” 441

Now Johnny all night long had heard
The owls in tuneful concert strive ;
No doubt too he the moon had seen ;
For in the moonlight he had been
From eight o'clock till five.

And thus, to Betty's question, he
Made answer, like a traveller bold,
(His very words I give to you,)
“ The cocks did crow to-whoo, to-whoo, 450
And the sun did shine so cold !”
—Thus answered Johnny in his glory,
And that was all his travel's story.

MICHAEL

A PASTORAL POEM.

IF from the public way you turn your steps
 Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
 You will suppose that with an upright path
 Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent
 The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
 But, courage ! for around that boisterous brook
 The mountains have all opened out themselves,
 And made a hidden valley of their own.
 No habitation can be seen ; but they
 Who journey thither find themselves alone 10
 With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
 That overhead are sailing in the sky.
 It is in truth an utter solitude ;
 Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
 But for one object which you might pass by.
 Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
 Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones !
 And to that simple object appertains
 A story—unenriched with strange events,
 Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside, 20
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first
 Of those domestic tales that spake to me
 Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
 Whom I already loved ;—not verily
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
 Where was their occupation and abode.
 And hence this Tale, while I was yet a Boy
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power
 Of Nature, by the gentle agency
 Of natural objects, led me on to feel 30
 For passions that were not my own, and think
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.
 Therefore, although it be a history
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same
 For the delight of a few natural hearts ;

And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
Of youthful Poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name ;
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone ; and oftentimes,
When others heeded not, He heard the South 50
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
" The winds are now devising work for me !"
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains : he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the heights. 60
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
The common air ; hills, which with vigorous step
He had so often climbed ; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory 70
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain ;
Those fields, those hills—what could they less ? had
laid

Strong hold on his affections, were to him
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
 His Helpmate was a comely matron, old—
 Though younger than himself full twenty years. 80
 She was a woman of a stirring life,
 Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had
 Of antique form ; this large, for spinning wool ;
 That small, for flax ; and, if one wheel had rest,
 It was because the other was at work.
 The Pair had but one inmate in their house,
 An only Child, who had been born to them
 When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
 To deem that he was old,—in shepherd's phrase,
 With one foot in the grave. This only Son, 90
 With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
 The one of an inestimable worth,
 Made all their household. I may truly say,
 That they were as a proverb in the vale
 For endless industry. When day was gone,
 And from their occupations out of doors
 The Son and Father were come home, even then,
 Their labour did not cease ; unless when all
 Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there,
 Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk, 100
 Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,
 And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the
 meal
 Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)
 And his old Father both betook themselves
 To such convenient work as might employ
 Their hands by the fire-side ; perhaps to card
 Wool for the Housewife's spindle, or repair
 Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
 Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
 That in our ancient uncouth country style

With huge and black projection overbrowed
Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp ;
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn—and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had found,
And left, the couple neither gay perhaps 120
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,
There by the light of this old lamp they sate,
Father and Son, while far into the night
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,
Making the cottage through the silent hours
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
This light was famous in its neighbourhood,
And was a public symbol of the life 130
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
And westward to the village near the lake ;
And from this constant light, so regular,
And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named THE EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years, 140
The Shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
Have loved his Helpmate ; but to Michael's heart
This son of his old age was yet more dear—
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all—
Than that a child, more than all other gifts
That earth can offer to declining man,
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
And stirrings of inquietude, when they
By tendency of nature needs must fail. 150

Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
 His heart and his heart's joy ! For oftentimes
 Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
 Had done him female service, not alone
 For pastime and delight, as is the use
 Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
 To acts of tenderness ; and he had rocked
 His cradle, as with a woman's gentle hand.

And in a later time, ere yet the Boy
 Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love, 160
 Albeit of a stern unbending mind,
 To have the Young-one in his sight, when he
 Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
 Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched
 Under the large old oak, that near his door
 Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade,
 Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,
 Thence in our rustic dialect was called
 The CLIPPING TREE,¹ a name which yet it bears.
 There, while they two were sitting in the shade, 170
 With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
 Would Michael exercise his heart with looks
 Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
 Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep
 By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
 Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up
 A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek
 Two steady roses that were five years old ;
 Then Michael from a winter coppice cut 180
 With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
 With iron, making it throughout in all
 Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
 And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipt
 He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
 At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;
 And, to his office prematurely called,

¹ Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing.

There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help ;
And for this cause not always, I believe, 190
Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;
Though nought was left undone which staff, or voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
Against the mountain blasts ; and to the heights,
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his Father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the Shepherd loved before
Were dearer now ? that from the Boy there came 200
Feelings and emanations—things which were
Light to the sun and music to the wind ;
And that the old Man's heart seemed born again ?

Thus in his Father's sight the Boy grew up :
And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived
From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
Distressful tidings. Long before the time
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound
In surety for his brother's son, a man 211
Of an industrious life, and ample means ;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,
A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost. 220
As soon as he had armed himself with strength
To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once
A portion of his patrimonial fields.

Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,
 And his heart failed him. " Isabel," said he,
 Two evenings after he had heard the news,
 " I have been toiling more than seventy years,
 And in the open sunshine of God's love
 Have we all lived ; yet, if these fields of ours 230
 Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think
 That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
 Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself
 Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;
 And I have lived to be a fool at last
 To my own family. An evil man
 That was, and made an evil choice, if he
 Were false to us ; and, if he were not false.
 There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
 Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ;—but 240
 'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

When I began, my purpose was to speak
 Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.
 Our Luke shall leave us. Isabel ; the land
 Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;
 He shall possess it, free as is the wind
 That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,
 Another kinsman—he will be our friend
 In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
 Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall go, 250
 And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift
 He quickly will repair this loss, and then
 He may return to us. If here he stay,
 What can be done ? Where every one is poor,
 What can be gained ?"

At this the old Man paused,
 And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
 Was busy, looking back into past times.
 There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,
 He was a parish-boy—at the church-door
 They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence, 260
 And halfpennies, wherewith the neighbours bought
 A basket, which they filled with pedlar's wares ;

And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,
And left estates and monies to the poor,
And, at his birth-place, built a chapel floored
With marble, which he sent from foreign lands. 270
These thoughts, and many others of like sort,
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,
And her face brightened. The old Man was glad,
And thus resumed :—" Well, Isabel ! this scheme
These two days has been meat and drink to me.
Far more than we have lost is left us yet.

We have enough—I wish indeed that I
Were younger ;—but this hope is a good hope.
Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best
Buy for him more, and let us send him forth 280
To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night :
—If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night."

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
With a light heart. The Housewife for five days
Was restless morn and night, and all day long
Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
Things needful for the journey of her son.
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
To stop her in her work : for, when she lay
By Michael's side, she through the last two nights 290
Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep :
And when they rose at morning she could see
That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
Were sitting at the door, " Thou must not go :
We have no other Child but thee to lose,
None to remember—do not go away,
For if thou leave thy Father he will die."
The Youth made answer with a jocund voice ;
And Isabel, when she had told her fears, 300
Recovered heart. That evening her best fare

Did she bring forth, and all together sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work ;
And all the ensuing week the house appeared
As cheerful as a grove in Spring : at length
The expected letter from their kinsman came,
With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy ;
To which, requests were added, that forthwith 310
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
The letter was read over ; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbours round ;
Nor was there at that time on English land
A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
Had to her house returned, the old Man said,
" He shall depart to-morrow." To this word
The Housewife answered, talking much of things
Which, if at such short notice he should go,
Would surely be forgotten. But at length 320
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a Sheep-fold ; and, before he heard
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
With Luke that evening thitherward he walked :
And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,
And thus the old Man spake to him :—" My son, 331
To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full heart
I look upon thee, for thou art the same
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
I will relate to thee some little part
Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good
When thou art from me, even if I should touch
On things thou canst not know of.—After thou

First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls 340
To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away
Two days, and blessings from thy Father's tongue
Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
And still I loved thee with increasing love.
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
Than when I heard thee by our own fireside
First uttering, without words, a natural tune ;
While thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed month,
And in the open fields my life was passed 350
And on the mountains ; else I think that thou
Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.
But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,
As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know.”
Luke had a manly heart ; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old Man grasped his hand,
And said, “ Nay, do not take it so—I see
That these are things of which I need not speak. 360
—Even to the utmost I have been to thee
A kind and a good Father : and herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at others' hands ; for, though now old
Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my youth.
Both of them sleep together : here they lived,
As all their Forefathers had done ; and, when
At length their time was come, they were not loth
To give their bodies to the family mould. 370
I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived,
But 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burthened when they came to me ;
Till I was forty years of age, not more
Than half of my inheritance was mine.
I toiled and toiled ; God blessed me in my work,
And till these three weeks past the land was free.
—It looks as if it never could endure

Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke, 380
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
 That thou shouldst go."

At this the old Man paused ;
 Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :
 "This was a work for us ; and now, my Son,
 It is a work for me. But, lay one stone—
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope ;—we both may live
 To see a better day. At eighty-four
 I still am strong and hale ;—do thou thy part ; 390
 I will do mine.—I will begin again
 With many tasks that were resigned to thee :
 Up to the heights, and in among the storms,
 Will I without thee go again, and do
 All works which I was wont to do alone,
 Before I knew thy face.—Heaven bless thee, Boy !
 Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
 With many hopes ; it should be so—yes—yes
 I knew that thou couldst never have a wish
 To leave me, Luke : thou hast been bound to me 400
 Only by links of love : when thou art gone,
 What will be left to us !—But I forget
 My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
 As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,
 When thou art gone away, should evil men
 Be thy companions, think of me, my Son,
 And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,
 And God will strengthen thee : amid all fear
 And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
 May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived, 410
 Who, being innocent, did for that cause
 Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well—
 When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see
 A work which is not here : a covenant
 'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate
 Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
 And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped down,
 And, as his Father had requested, laid
 The first stone of the Sheep-fold. At the sight 420
 The old Man's grief broke from him ; to his heart
 He pressed his Son, he kissèd him and wept ;
 And to the house together they returned.
 —Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,
 Ere the night fell :—with morrow's dawn the Boy
 Began his journey, and, when he had reached
 The public way, he put on a bold face ;
 And all the neighbours, as he passed their doors,
 Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
 That followed him till he was out of sight. 430

A good report did from their Kinsman come,
 Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy
 Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
 Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout
 "The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
 Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
 So, many months passed on : and once again
 The Shepherd went about his daily work
 With confident and cheerful thoughts ; and now
 Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour 440
 He to that valley took his way, and there
 Wrought at the Sheep-fold. Meantime Luke began
 To slacken in his duty ; and, at length,
 He in the dissolute city gave himself
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
 'Twill make a thing endurable, which else
 Would overset the brain, or break the heart : 450
 I have conversed with more than one who well
 Remember the old Man, and what he was
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks

He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,
 And listened to the wind ; and, as before,
 Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,
 And for the land, his small inheritance.
 And to that hollow dell from time to time 460
 Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
 His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
 The pity which was then in every heart
 For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all,
 That many and many a day he thither went,
 And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the Sheep-fold, sometimes was he seen
 Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
 The length of full seven years, from time to time, 470
 He at the building of this Sheep-fold wrought,
 And left the work unfinished when he died.
 Three years, or little more, did Isabel
 Survive her Husband : at her death the estate
 Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
 The Cottage which was named the EVENING STAR
 Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground
 On which it stood ; great changes have been wrought
 In all the neighbourhood :—yet the oak is left
 That grew beside their door ; and the remains 480
 Of the unfinished Sheep-fold may be seen
 Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

FAREWELL LINES

“ HIGH bliss is only for a higher state,”
 But, surely, if severe afflictions borne
 With patience merit the reward of peace,
 Peace ye deserve ; and may the solid good,
 Sought by a wise though late exchange, and here
 With bounteous hand beneath a cottage-roof
 To you accorded, never be withdrawn.
 Nor for the world's best promises renounced.
 Most soothing was it for a welcome Friend,

Fresh from the crowded city, to behold 10
 That lonely union, privacy so deep,
 Such calm employments, such entire content.
 So when the rain is over, the storm laid,
 A pair of herons oft-times have I seen,
 Upon a rocky islet, side by side,
 Drying their feathers in the sun, at ease ;
 And so, when night with grateful gloom had fallen,
 Two glow-worms in such nearness that they shared,
 As seemed, their soft self-satisfying light,
 Each with the other, on the dewy ground, 20
 Where He that made them blesses their repose.—
 When wandering among lakes and hills I note,
 Once more, those creatures thus by nature paired,
 And guarded in their tranquil state of life,
 Even, as your happy presence to my mind
 Their union brought, will they repay the debt,
 And send a thankful spirit back to you,
 With hope that we, dear Friends ! shall meet again.

HER EYES ARE WILD

I.

HER eyes are wild, her head is bare,
 The sun has burnt her coal-black hair ;
 Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,
 And she came far from over the main,
 She has a baby on her arm,
 Or else she were alone :
 And underneath the hay-stack warm,
 And on the greenwood stone,
 She talked and sung the woods among,
 And it was in the English tongue. 10

II.

“ Sweet babe ! they say that I am mad,
 But nay, my heart is far too glad ;
 And I am happy when I sing
 Full many a sad and doleful thing :

Then, lovely baby, do not fear !
 I pray thee have no fear of me ;
 But safe as in a cradle, here
 My lovely baby ! thou shalt be :
 To thee I know too much I owe ;
 I cannot work thee any woe.

20

III.

“ A fire was once within my brain ;
 And in my head a dull, dull pain ;
 And fiendish faces, one, two, three,
 Hung at my breast, and pulled at me ;
 But then there came a sight of joy ;
 It came at once to do me good ;
 I waked, and saw my little boy,
 My little boy of flesh and blood ;
 Oh joy for me that sight to see !
 For he was here, and only he.

30

IV.

“ Suck, little babe, oh suck again !
 It cools my blood ; it cools my brain ;
 Thy lips I feel them, baby ! they
 Draw from my heart the pain away.
 Oh ! press me with thy little hand ;
 It loosens something at my chest ;
 About that tight and deadly band
 I feel thy little fingers prest.
 The breeze I see is in the tree :
 It comes to cool my babe and me.

40

V.

“ Oh ! love me, love me, little boy !
 Thou art thy mother's only joy ;
 And do not dread the waves below,
 When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go ;

The high crag cannot work me harm,
Nor leaping torrents when they howl ;
The babe I carry on my arm,
He saves for me my precious soul ;
Then happy lie ; for blest am I ;
Without me my sweet babe would die. 50

VI.

“Then do not fear, my boy ! for thee
Bold as a lion will I be ;
And I will always be thy guide,
Through hollow snows and rivers wide.
I'll build an Indian bower ; I know
The leaves that make the softest bed :
And if from me thou wilt not go,
But still be true till I am dead,
My pretty thing ! then thou shalt sing
As merry as the birds in spring. 60

VII.

“Thy father cares not for my breast,
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest ;
'Tis all thine own !—and if its hue
Be changed, that was so fair to view,
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove !
My beauty, little child, is flown,
But thou wilt live with me in love ;
And what if my poor cheek be brown ?
'Tis well for me thou canst not see
How pale and wan it else would be. 70

VIII.

“Dread not their taunts, my little Life ;
I am thy father's wedded wife ;
And underneath the spreading tree
We two will live in honesty.

If his sweet boy he could forsake,
 With me he never would have stayed :
 From him no harm my babe can take ;
 But he, poor man ! is wretched made ;
 And every day we two will pray
 For him that's gone and far away.

89

IX.

" I'll teach my boy the sweetest things .
 I'll teach him how the owlet sings.
 My little babe ! thy lips are still,
 And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.
 —Where art thou gone, my own dear child ?
 What wicked looks are those I see ?
 Alas ! Alas ! that look so wild,
 It never, never came from me :
 If thou art mad, my pretty lad,
 Then I must be for ever sad.

90

X.

" Oh ! smile on me, my little lamb !
 For I thy own dear mother am :
 My love for thee has well been tried :
 I've sought thy father far and wide.
 I know the poisons of the shade ;
 I know the earth-nuts fit for food :
 'Then, pretty dear, be not afraid :
 We'll find thy father in the wood.
 Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away !
 And there, my babe, we'll live for aye."

100

POEMS ON THE NAMING OF PLACES

ADVERTISEMENT

By persons resident in the country, and attached to rural objects, many places will be found unnamed or of unknown names, where little Incidents must have occurred, or feelings been experienced, which will have given to such places a private and peculiar interest. From a wish to give some sort of record to such Incidents, and renew the gratification of such feelings, Names have been given to Places by the Author and some of his Friends, and the following Poems written in consequence.

I.

It was an April morning : fresh and clear
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
Ran with a young man's speed ; and yet the voice
Of waters which the winter had supplied
Was softened down into a vernal tone.
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
And hopes and wishes, from all living things
Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
The budding groves seemed eager to urge on
The steps of June ; as if their various hues 10
Were only hindrances that stood between
Them and their object : but, meanwhile, prevailed
Such an entire contentment in the air
That every naked ash, and tardy tree
Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance
With which it looked on this delightful day
Were native to the summer.—Up the brook
I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
Alive to all things and forgetting all.
At length I to a sudden turning came 20

In this continuous glen, where down a rock
 The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
 Sent forth such sallies of glad sound, that all
 Which I till then had heard appeared the voice
 Of common pleasure : beast and bird, the lamb,
 The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush,
 Vied with this waterfall, and made a song
 Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth
 Or like some natural produce of the air,
 That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here ;
 But 'twas the foliage of the rocks—the birch, 31
 The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
 With hanging islands of resplendent furze :
 And on a summit, distant a short space,
 By any who should look beyond the dell
 A single mountain-cottage might be seen.
 I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
 " Our thoughts at least are ours ; and this wild nook,
 My EMMA,¹ I will dedicate to thee."
 —Soon did the spot become my other home, 40
 My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
 And of the Shepherds who have seen me there,
 To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
 Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
 Years after we are gone and in our graves,
 When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
 May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL. 47

II.

TO JOANNA

AMID the smoke of cities did you pass
 The time of early youth ; and there you learned,
 From years of quiet industry, to love
 The living Beings by your own fire-side,
 With such a strong devotion, that your heart
 Is slow to meet the sympathies of them

¹ *Emma* : the poet's sister *Dora*, just as *Emmeline* is elsewhere used as a pseudonym for *Dorothy*.

Who look upon the hills with tenderness,
 And make dear friendships with the streams and groves.
 Yet we, who are transgressors in this kind,
 Dwelling retired in our simplicity 10
 Among the woods and fields, we love you well,
 Joanna ! and I guess, since you have been
 So distant from us now for two long years,
 That you will gladly listen to discourse
 However trivial, if you thence be taught
 That they, with whom you once were happy, talk
 Familiarly of you and of old times.

While I was seated, now some ten days past,
 Beneath those lofty firs, that overtop
 Their ancient neighbour, the old steeple-tower, 20
 The Vicar from his gloomy house hard by
 Came forth to greet me ; and, when he had asked,
 “ How fares Joanna, that wild-hearted Maid !
 And when will she return to us ? ” he paused ;
 And, after short exchange of village news,
 He with grave looks demanded for what cause,
 Reviving obsolete idolatry,
 I, like a Runic Priest, in characters
 Of formidable size had chiselled out
 Some uncouth name upon the native rock, 30
 Above the Rotha, by the forest-side.
 —Now, by those dear immunities of heart
 Engendered between malice and true love,
 I was not loth to be so catechised,
 And this was my reply :—“ As it befell,
 One summer morning we had walked abroad
 At break of day, Joanna and myself.
 —’Twas that delightful season when the broom,
 Full-flowered, and visible on every steep,
 Along the copses runs in veins of gold. 40
 Our pathway led us on to Rotha’s banks ;
 And, when we came in front of that tall rock
 That eastward looks, I there stopped short—and stood
 Tracing the lofty barrier with my eye
 From base to summit ; such delight I found

To note in shrub and tree, in stone and flower,
 That intermixture of delicious hues,
 Along so vast a surface, all at once,
 In one impression, by connecting force
 Of their own beauty, imaged in the heart. 50
 —When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,
 Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
 That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
 The Rock, like something starting from a sleep,
 Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed again ;
 That ancient Woman seated on Helm-crag
 Was ready with her cavern ; Hammar-scar,
 And the tall Steep of Silver-how, sent forth
 A noise of laughter ; southern Loughrigg heard,
 And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone ; 60
 Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
 Carried the Lady's voice,—old Skiddaw blew
 His speaking-trumpet ;—back out of the clouds
 Of Glaramara southward came the voice ;
 And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head.
 —Now whether (said I to our cordial Friend,
 Who in the hey-day of astonishment
 Smiled in my face) this were in simple truth
 A work accomplished by the brotherhood
 Of ancient mountains, or my ear was touched 70
 With dreams and visionary impulses
 To me alone imparted, sure I am
 That there was a loud uproar in the hills.
 And, while we both were listening, to my side
 The fair Joanna drew, as if she wished
 To shelter from some object of her fear.
 —And hence, long afterwards, when eighteen moons
 Were wasted, as I chanced to walk alone
 Beneath this rock, at sunrise, on a calm
 And silent morning, I sat down, and there, 80
 In memory of affections old and true,
 I chiselled out in those rude characters
 Joanna's name deep in the living stone :—
 And I, and all who dwell by my fireside,
 Have called the lovely rock, JOANNA'S ROCK."

III.

THERE is an Eminence,—of these our hills
 The last that parleys with the setting sun ;
 We can behold it from our orchard seat ;
 And, when at evening we pursue our walk
 Along the public way, this Peak, so high
 Above us, and so distant in its height,
 Is visible ; and often seems to send
 Its own deep quiet to restore our hearts.
 The meteors make of it a favourite haunt :
 The star of Jove, so beautiful and large 10
 In the mid heavens, is never half so fair
 As when he shines above it. 'Tis in truth
 The loneliest place we have among the clouds.
 And She who dwells with me, whom I have loved
 With such communion that no place on earth
 Can ever be a solitude to me,
 Hath to this lonely Summit given my Name.

IV.

A NARROW girdle of rough stones and crags,
 A rude and natural causeway, interposed
 Between the water and a winding slope
 Of copse and thicket, leaves the eastern shore
 Of Grasmere safe in its own privacy :
 And there myself and two beloved Friends,
 One calm September morning, ere the mist
 Had altogether yielded to the sun,
 Sauntered on this retired and difficult way. 9
 ———Ill suits the road with one in haste ; but we
 Played with our time ; and, as we strolled along,
 It was our occupation to observe
 Such objects as the waves had tossed ashore—
 Feather, or leaf, or weed, or withered bough,
 Each on the other heaped, along the line
 Of the dry wreck. And, in our vacant mood,
 Not seldom did we stop to watch some tuft

Of dandelion seed or thistle's beard,
 That skimmed the surface of the dead calm lake,
 Suddenly halting now—a lifeless stand ! 20
 And starting off again with freak as sudden ;
 In all its sportive wanderings, all the while,
 Making report of an invisible breeze
 That was its wings, its chariot, and its horse,
 Its playmate, rather say, its moving soul.
 —And often, trifling with a privilege
 Alike indulged to all, we paused, one now,
 And now the other, to point out, perchance
 To pluck, some flower or water-weed, too fair
 Either to be divided from the place 30
 On which it grew, or to be left alone
 To its own beauty. Many such there are,
 Fair ferns and flowers, and chiefly that tall fern,
 So stately, of the Queen Osmunda named ;
 Plant lovelier, in its own retired abode
 On Grasmere's beach, than Naiad by the side
 Of Grecian brook, or Lady of the Mere,
 Sole-sitting by the shores of old romance.
 —So fared we that bright morning : from the fields,
 Meanwhile, a noise was heard, the busy mirth 40
 Of reapers, men and women, boys and girls.
 Delighted much to listen to those sounds,
 And feeding thus our fancies, we advanced
 Along the indented shore ; when suddenly,
 Through a thin veil of glittering haze was seen
 Before us, on a point of jutting land,
 The tall and upright figure of a Man
 Attired in peasant's garb, who stood alone,
 Angling beside the margin of the lake.
 "Improvident and reckless," we exclaimed, 50
 "The Man must be, who thus can lose a day
 Of the mid harvest, when the labourer's hire
 Is ample, and some little might be stored
 Wherewith to cheer him in the winter time."
 Thus talking of that Peasant, we approached
 Close to the spot where with his rod and line
 He stood alone ; whereat he turned his head

To greet us—and we saw a Man worn down
 By sickness, gaunt and lean, with sunken cheeks
 And wasted limbs, his legs so long and lean 60
 That for my single self I looked at them,
 Forgetful of the body they sustained.—
 Too weak to labour in the harvest field,
 The Man was using his best skill to gain
 A pittance from the dead unfeeling lake
 That knew not of his wants. I will not say
 What thoughts immediately were ours, nor how
 The happy idleness of that sweet morn,
 With all its lovely images, was changed 70
 To serious musing and to self-reproach.
 Nor did we fail to see within ourselves
 What need there is to be reserved in speech,
 And temper all our thoughts with charity.
 —Therefore, unwilling to forget that day,
 My Friend, Myself, and She who then received
 The same admonishment, have called the place
 By a memorial name, uncouth indeed
 As e'er by mariner was given to bay
 Or foreland, on a new-discovered coast ;
 And POINT RASH-JUDGMENT is the Name it bears. 80

V.

TO M. H.

OUR walk was far among the ancient trees :
 There was no road, nor any woodman's path ;
 But a thick umbrage—checking the wild growth
 Of weed and sapling, along soft green turf
 Beneath the branches—of itself had made
 A track, that brought us to a slip of lawn,
 And a small bed of water in the woods.
 All round this pool both flocks and herds might drink
 On its firm margin, even as from a well,
 Or some stone-basin which the herdsman's hand 10
 Had shaped for their refreshment ; nor did sun,
 Or wind from any quarter, ever come,

But as a blessing to this calm recess,
 This glade of water and this one green field.
 The spot was made by Nature for herself ;
 The travellers know it not, and 'twill remain
 Unknown to them ; but it is beautiful ;
 And if a man should plant his cottage near,
 Should sleep beneath the shelter of its trees,
 And blend its waters with his daily meal, 20
 He would so love it, that in his death-hour
 Its image would survive among his thoughts :
 And therefore, my sweet MARY, this still Nook,
 With all its beeches, we have named from You !

VI.

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world
 Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
 A habitation in this peaceful Vale,
 Sharp season followed of continual storm
 In deepest winter ; and, from week to week,
 Pathway, and lane, and public road, were clogged
 With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill,
 At a short distance from my cottage, stands
 A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont
 To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof 10
 Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
 Of refuge, with an unincumbered floor.
 Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
 And sometimes on a speck of visible earth,
 The redbreast near me hopped ; nor was I loth
 To sympathize with vulgar coppice birds
 That, for protection from the nipping blast,
 Hither repaired.—A single beech-tree grew
 Within this grove of firs ! and, on the fork
 Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest ; 20
 A last year's nest, conspicuously built
 At such small elevation from the ground
 As gave sure sign that they, who in that house
 Of nature and of love had made their home

Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long
 Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes
 A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-flock,
 Would watch my motions with suspicious stare,
 From the remotest outskirts of the grove,—
 Some nook where they had made their final stand,
 Huddling together from two fears—the fear 31
 Of me and of the storm. Full many an hour
 Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees
 Had been so thickly planted and had thriven
 In such perplexed and intricate array,
 That vainly did I seek beneath their stems
 A length of open space, where to and fro
 My feet might move without concern or care ;
 And, baffled thus, though earth from day to day
 Was fettered, and the air by storm disturbed, 40
 I ceased the shelter to frequent,—and prized,
 Less than I wished to prize, that calm recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring returned
 To clothe the fields with verdure. Other haunts
 Meanwhile were mine ; till one bright April day,
 By chance retiring from the glare of noon
 To this forsaken covert, there I found
 A hoary pathway traced between the trees,
 And winding on with such an easy line
 Along a natural opening, that I stood 50
 Much wondering how I could have sought in vain
 For what was now so obvious. To abide,
 For an allotted interval of ease,
 Under my cottage-roof, had gladly come
 From the wild sea a cherished Visitant ;
 And with the sight of this same path—begun,
 Begun and ended, in the shady grove,
 Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind
 That, to this opportune recess allured,
 He had surveyed it with a finer eye, 60
 A heart more wakeful ; and had worn the track
 By pacing here, unwearied and alone,
 In that habitual restlessness of foot

That haunts the Sailor, measuring o'er and o'er
 His short domain upon the vessel's deck,
 While she pursues her course through the dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant shore,
 And taken thy first leave of those green hills
 And rocks that were the play-ground of thy youth,
 Year followed year, my Brother ! and we two, 70
 Conversing not, knew little in what mould
 Each other's mind was fashioned ; and at length,
 When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
 Between us there was little other bond
 Than common feelings of fraternal love.
 But thou, a School-boy, to the sea hadst carried
 Undying recollections ; Nature there
 Was with thee ; she, who loved us both, she still
 Was with thee ; and even so didst thou become
 A *silent* Poet ; from the solitude 80
 Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
 Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
 And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
 —Back to the joyless Ocean thou art gone ;
 Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours
 Could I withhold thy honoured name,—and now
 I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.
 Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
 Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong ;
 And there I sit at evening, when the steep 90
 Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake
 And one green island, gleam between the stems
 Of the dark firs, a visionary scene !
 And while I gaze upon the spectacle
 Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight
 Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
 My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.
 Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,
 Muttering the verses which I muttered first
 Among the mountains, through the midnight watch
 Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's deck 101
 In some far region, here, while o'er my head,

At every impulse of the moving breeze,
 The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,
 Alone I tread this path ;—for aught I know,
 Timing my steps to thine ; and, with a store
 Of undistinguishable sympathies,
 Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
 When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
 A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale. 110

NOTE.—This wish was not granted ; the lamented Person not long after perished by shipwreck, in discharge of his duty as Commander of the Honourable East India Company's Vessel, the Earl of Abergavenny.

VII.

FORTH from a jutting ridge, around whose base
 Winds our deep Vale, two heath-clad Rocks ascend
 In fellowship, the loftiest of the pair
 Rising to no ambitious height ; yet both,
 O'er lake and stream, mountain and flowery mead,
 Unfolding prospects fair as human eyes
 Ever beheld. Up-led with mutual help,
 To one or other brow of those twin Peaks
 Were two adventurous Sisters wont to climb, 9
 And took no note of the hour while thence they gazed,
 The blooming heath their couch, gazed side by side,
 In speechless admiration. I, a witness
 And frequent sharer of their calm delight
 With thankful heart, to either Eminence
 Gave the baptismal name each Sister bore.
 Now are they parted, far as Death's cold hand
 Hath power to part the Spirits of those who love
 As they did love. Ye kindred Pinnacles— 18
 That, while the generations of mankind
 Follow each other to their hiding-place
 In time's abyss, are privileged to endure
 Beautiful in yourselves, and richly graced
 With like command of beauty—grant your aid
 For MARY's humble, SARAH's silent claim,
 That their pure joy in nature may survive
 From age to age in blended memory. 26

POEMS OF THE FANCY

A WHIRL-BLAST from behind the hill
Rushed o'er the wood with startling sound ;
Then—all at once the air was still,
And showers of hailstones pattered round.
Where leafless oaks towered high above,
I sat within an undergrove
Of tallest hollies, tall and green ;
A fairer bower was never seen.
From year to year the spacious floor
With withered leaves is covered o'er,
And all the year the bower is green.
But see ! where'er the hailstones drop
The withered leaves all skip and hop ;
There's not a breeze—no breath of air—
Yet here, and there, and every where
Along the floor, beneath the shade
By those embowering hollies made,
The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
As if with pipes and music rare
Some Robin Good-fellow were there,
And all those leaves, in festive glee,
Were dancing to the minstrelsy.

THE WATERFALL AND THE EGLANTINE

I.

“ BEGONE, thou fond presumptuous Elf,”
Exclaimed an angry Voice,
“ Nor dare to thrust thy foolish self
Between me and my choice !”

A small Cascade fresh swoln with snows
 Thus threatened a poor Briar-rose,
 That, all bespattered with his foam,
 And dancing high and dancing low,
 Was living, as a child might know,
 In an unhappy home.

10

II.

"Dost thou presume my course to block ?
 Off, off ! or, puny Thing !
 I'll hurl thee headlong with the rock
 To which thy fibres cling."
 The Flood was tyrannous and strong ;
 The patient Briar suffered long,
 Nor did he utter groan or sigh,
 Hoping the danger would be past ;
 But, seeing no relief, at last
 He ventured to reply.

20

III.

"Ah !" said the Briar, "blame me not ;
 Why should we dwell in strife ?
 We who in this sequestered spot
 Once lived a happy life !
 You stirred me on my rocky bed—
 What pleasure through my veins you spread
 The summer long, from day to day,
 My leaves you freshened and bedewed ;
 Nor was it common gratitude
 That did your cares repay.

30

IV.

"When spring came on with bud and bell,
 Among these rocks did I
 Before you hang my wreaths to tell
 That gentle days were nigh !
 And in the sultry summer hours
 I sheltered you with leaves and flowers ;

And in my leaves—now shed and gone,
 The linnet lodged, and for us two
 Chanted his pretty songs, when you
 Had little voice or none.

40

V.

“ But now proud thoughts are in your breast—
 What grief is mine you see,
 Ah ! would you think, even yet how blest
 Together we might be !
 Though of both leaf and flower bereft,
 Some ornaments to me are left—
 Rich store of scarlet hips is mine,
 With which I, in my humble way,
 Would deck you many a winter day,
 A happy Eglantine !”

50

VI.

What more he said I cannot tell,
 The Torrent down the rocky dell
 Came thundering loud and fast ;
 I listened, nor aught else could hear ;
 The Briar quaked—and much I fear
 Those accents were his last.

56

THE OAK AND THE BROOM

A PASTORAL.

I.

His simple truths did Andrew glean
 Beside the babbling rills ;
 A careful student he had been
 Among the woods and hills.
 One winter's night, when through the trees
 The wind was roaring, on his knees

His youngest born did Andrew hold :
And while the rest, a ruddy quire,
Were seated round their blazing fire,
This Tale the Shepherd told.

10

II.

“ I saw a crag, a lofty stone
As ever tempest beat !
Out of its head an Oak had grown,
A Broom out of its feet.
The time was March, a cheerful noon—
The thaw-wind, with the breath of June,
Breathed gently from the warm south-west :
When, in a voice sedate with age,
This Oak, a giant and a sage,
His neighbour thus addressed :—

20

III.

“ ‘ Eight weary weeks, through rock and clay,
Along this mountain’s edge,
The Frost hath wrought both night and day,
Wedge driving after wedge.
Look up ! and think, above your head
What trouble, surely, will be bred ;
Last night I heard a crash—’tis true,
The splinters took another road—
I see them yonder—what a load
For such a Thing as you !

30

IV.

“ ‘ You are preparing as before,
To deck your slender shape ;
And yet, just three years back—no more—
You had a strange escape :
Down from yon cliff a fragment broke ;
It thundered down, with fire and smoke,

And hitherward pursued its way ;
This ponderous block was caught by me,
And o'er your head, as you may see,
'Tis hanging to this day !

40

V.

“ ‘ If breeze or bird to this rough steep
Your kind's first seed did bear ;
The breeze had better been asleep,
The bird caught in a snare :
For you and your green twigs decoy
The little witless shepherd-boy
To come and slumber in your bower ;
And trust me, on some sultry noon,
Both you and he, Heaven knows how soon !
Will perish in one hour.

50

VI.

“ ‘ From me this friendly warning take ’—
The Broom began to doze,
And thus, to keep herself awake,
Did gently interpose :
‘ My thanks for your discourse are due ;
That more than what you say is true
I know, and I have known it long ;
Frail is the bond by which we hold
Our being, whether young or old,
Wise, foolish, weak, or strong.

60

VII.

“ ‘ Disasters, do the best we can,
Will reach both great and small ;
And he is oft the wisest man,
Who is not wise at all.
For me, why should I wish to roam ?
This spot is my paternal home,

It is my pleasant heritage ;
My father many a happy year
Spread here his careless blossoms, here
Attained a good old age.

70

VIII.

“ ‘ Even such as his may be my lot.
What cause have I to haunt
My heart with terrors ? Am I not
In truth a favoured plant !
On me such bounty Summer pours,
That I am covered o’er with flowers ;
And when the Frost is in the sky,
My branches are so fresh and gay
That you might look at me and say,
This Plant can never die.

80

IX.

“ ‘ The butterfly, all green and gold,
To me hath often flown,
Here in my blossoms to behold
Wings lovely as his own.
When grass is chill with rain or dew,
Beneath my shade the mother-ewe
Lies with her infant lamb ; I see
The love they to each other make,
And the sweet joy which they partake,
It is a joy to me.’

90

X.

“ Her voice was blithe, her heart was light ;
The Broom might have pursued
Her speech, until the stars of night
Their journey had renewed ;
But in the branches of the oak
Two ravens now began to croak

Their nuptial song, a gladsome air ;
 And to her own green bower the breeze
 That instant brought two stripling bees
 To rest, or murmur there.

100

XI.

" One night, my Children ! from the north
 There came a furious blast ;
 At break of day I ventured forth,
 And near the cliff I passed.
 The storm had fallen upon the Oak,
 And struck him with a mighty stroke,
 And whirled, and whirled him far away ;
 And, in one hospitable cleft,
 The little careless Broom was left
 To live for many a day."

110

TO THE DAISY

" Her¹ divine skill taught me this,
 That from every thing I saw
 I could some instruction draw,
 And raise pleasure to the height
 Through the meanest object's sight.
 By the murmur of a spring,
 Or the least bough's rustelling ;
 By a Daisy whose leaves spread
 Shut when Titan goes to bed ;
 Or a shady bush or tree ;
 She could more infuse in me
 Than all Nature's beauties can
 In some other wiser man."

G. WITHER.

In youth from rock to rock I went,
 From hill to hill in discontent
 Of pleasure high and turbulent,
 Most pleased when most uneasy ;
 But now my own delights I make,—
 My thirst at every rill can slake,
 And gladly Nature's love partake
 Of Thee, sweet Daisy !

¹ His Muse.

Thee Winter in the garland wears
That thinly decks his few grey hairs ; 10
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
That she may sun thee ;
Whole Summer-fields are thine by right ;
And Autumn, melancholy Wight !
Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane ;
Pleased at his greeting thee again ;
Yet nothing daunted, 20
Nor grieved if thou be set at nought :
And oft alone in nooks remote
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose ;
Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
Her head impearling,
Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
Yet hast not gone without thy fame ; 30
Thou art indeed by many a claim
The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
Or, some bright day of April sky,
Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie
Near the green holly,
And wearily at length should fare ;
He needs but look about, and there
Thou art !—a friend at hand, to scare
His melancholy. 40

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
Ere thus I have lain couched an hour,
Have I derived from thy sweet power
Some apprehension ;

Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
 Some memory that had taken flight ;
 Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,
 I drink out of an humbler urn 51
 A lowlier pleasure ;
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life our nature breeds ;
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh-smitten by the morning ray,
 When thou art up, alert and gay,
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play 60
 With kindred gladness :
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
 Hath often eased my pensive breast
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
 All seasons through, another debt,
 Which I, wherever thou art met,
 To thee am owing ;
 An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
 A happy, genial influence, 70
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year ! that round dost run
 Thy pleasant course,—when day's begun
 As ready to salute the sun
 As lark or leveret,
 Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;
 Nor be less dear to future men
 Than in old time ;—thou not in vain
 Art Nature's favourite.¹ 80

¹ See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honours formerly paid to this flower.

TO THE SAME FLOWER

WITH little here to do or see
 Of things that in the great world be,
 Daisy ! again I talk to thee,
 For thou art worthy,
 Thou unassuming Common-place
 Of Nature, with that homely face,
 And yet with something of a grace
 Which love makes for thee !

Of on the dappled turf at ease
 I sit, and play with similes, 10
 Loose types of things through all degrees,
 Thoughts of thy raising :
 And many a fond and idle name
 I give to thee, for praise or blame,
 As is the humour of the game,
 While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port ;
 Or sprightly maiden, of Love's court,
 In thy simplicity the sport
 Of all temptations ; 20
 A queen in crown of rubies drest ;
 A starveling in a scanty vest ;
 Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
 Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops with one eye
 Staring to threaten and defy,
 That thought comes next—and instantly
 The freak is over,
 The shape will vanish—and behold
 A silver shield with boss of gold, 30
 That spreads itself, some faery bold
 In fight to cover !

I see thee glittering from afar—
 And then thou art a pretty star ;
 Not quite so fair as many are
 In heaven above thee !
 Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
 Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—
 May peace come never to his nest,
 Who shall reprove thee !

40

Bright *Flower* ! for by that name at last,
 When all my reveries are past,
 I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
 Sweet silent creature !
 That breath'st with me in sun and air,
 Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
 My heart with gladness, and a share
 Of thy meek nature !

48

THE GREEN LINNET

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
 Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
 With brightest sunshine round me spread
 Of spring's unclouded weather,
 In this sequestered nook how sweet
 To sit upon my orchard-seat !
 And birds and flowers once more to greet,
 My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
 In all this covert of the blest :
 Hail to Thee, far above the rest
 In joy of voice and pinion !
 Thou, Linnet ! in thy green array,
 Presiding Spirit here to-day,
 Dost lead the revels of the May ;
 And this is thy dominion.

10

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
 Art sole in thy employment : 20
A Life, a Presence like the Air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair ;
 Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
 Yet seeming still to hover ;
There ! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings 30
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
 That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
A Brother of the dancing leaves ;
Then flits, and from the cottage eaves
 Pours forth his song in gushes ;
As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
 While fluttering in the bushes. 40

TO A SKY-LARK

Up with me ! up with me into the clouds !
 For thy song, Lark, is strong ;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds !
 Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
 Lift me, guide me, till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind !
I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
And to-day my heart is weary ;
Had I now the wings of a Faery, 10
Up to thee would I fly.

There is madness about thee, and joy divine
 In that song of thine ;
 Lift me, guide me, high and high
 To thy banqueting place in the sky.

Joyous as morning,
 Thou art laughing and scorning ;
 Thou hast a nest for thy love and thy rest,
 And, though little troubled with sloth,
 Drunken Lark ! thou wouldst be loth
 To be such a traveller as I. 20
 Happy, happy Liver,
 With a soul as strong as a mountain river
 Pouring out praise to the almighty Giver,
 Joy and jollity be with us both !

Alas ! my journey, rugged and uneven,
 Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind ;
 But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
 As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
 I, with my fate contented, will plod on, 30
 And hope for higher raptures, when life's day is done.

TO THE SMALL CELANDINE¹

PANSIES, lilies, kingcups, daisies,
 Let them live upon their praises ;
 Long as there's a sun that sets,
 Primroses will have their glory ;
 Long as there are violets,
 They will have a place in story :
 There's a flower that shall be mine,
 'Tis the little Celandine.

Eyes of some men travel far
 For the finding of a star ; 10
 Up and down the heavens they go,
 Men that keep a mighty rout !

¹ Common Pilewort.

I'm as great as they, I trow,
Since the day I found thee out,
Little Flower—I'll make a stir,
Like a sage astronomer.

Modest, yet withal an Elf
Bold, and lavish of thyself ;
Since we needs must first have met
I have seen thee, high and low, 20
Thirty years or more, and yet
'Twas a face I did not know ;
Thou hast now, go where I may,
Fifty greetings in a day.

Ere a leaf is on a bush,
In the time before the thrush
Has a thought about her nest,
Thou wilt come with half a call,
Spreading out thy glossy breast
Like a careless Prodigal ; 30
Telling tales about the sun,
When we've little warmth, or none.

Poets, vain men in their mood !
Travel with the multitude :
Never heed them ; I aver
That they all are wanton wooers ;
But the thrifty cottager,
Who stirs little out of doors,
Joys to spy thee near her home ;
Spring is coming, Thou art come ! 40

Comfort have thou of thy merit,
Kindly, unassuming Spirit !
Careless of thy neighbourhood,
Thou dost show thy pleasant face
On the moor, and in the wood,
In the lane ;—there's not a place,
Howsoever mean it be,
But 'tis good enough for thee.

Ill befall the yellow flowers,
 Children of the flaring hours !
 Buttercups, that will be seen,
 Whether we will see or no ;
 Others, too, of lofty mien ;
 They have done as worldlings do,
 Taken praise that should be thine,
 Little, humble Celandine.

50

Prophet of delight and mirth,
 Ill-requited upon earth ;
 Herald of a mighty band,
 Of a joyous train ensuing,
 Serving at my heart's command,
 Tasks that are no tasks renewing,
 I will sing, as doth behove,
 Hymns in praise of what I love !

60

TO THE SAME FLOWER

PLEASURES newly found are sweet
 When they lie about our feet :
 February last, my heart
 First at sight of thee was glad ;
 All unheard of as thou art,
 Thou must needs, I think, have had.
 Celandine ! and long ago,
 Praise of which I nothing know.

I have not a doubt but he,
 Whosoe'er the man might be,
 Who the first with pointed rays
 (Workman worthy to be sainted)
 Set the sign-board in a blaze,
 When the rising sun he painted,
 Took the fancy from a glance
 At thy glittering countenance.

10

Soon as gentle breezes bring
News of winter's vanishing,
And the children build their bowers,
Sticking 'kerchief-plots of mould 20
All about with full-blown flowers,
Thick as sheep in shepherd's fold !
With the proudest thou art there,
Mantling in the tiny square.

Often have I sighed to measure
By myself a lonely pleasure,
Sighed to think I read a book
Only read, perhaps, by me ;
Yet I long could overlook
Thy bright coronet and Thee, 30
And thy arch and wily ways,
And thy store of other praise.

Blithe of heart, from week to week
Thou dost play at hide-and-seek ;
While the patient primrose sits
Like a beggar in the cold,
Thou, a flower of wiser wits,
Slip'st into thy sheltering hold ;
Liveliest of the vernal train
When ye all are out again. 40

Drawn by what peculiar spell,
By what charm of sight or smell,
Does the dim-eyed curious Bee,
Labouring for her waxen cells,
Fondly settle upon Thee
Prized above all buds and bells
Opening daily at thy side,
By the season multiplied ?

Thou art not beyond the moon,
But a thing " beneath our shoon : " 50
Let the bold Discoverer thrid
In his bark the polar sea ;

Rear who will a pyramid ;
 Praise it is enough for me,
 If there be but three or four
 Who will love my little Flower.

56

WHO FANCED WHAT A PRETTY SIGHT

Who fancied what a pretty sight
 This Rock would be if edged around
 With living snow-drops ? circle bright !
 How glorious to this orchard-ground !
 Who loved the little Rock, and set
 Upon its head this coronet ?

Was it the humour of a child ?
 Or rather of some gentle maid,
 Whose brows, the day that she was styled
 The shepherd-queen, were thus arrayed ? 10
 Of man mature, or matron sage ?
 Or old man toying with his age ?

I asked—'twas whispered ; The device
 To each and all might well belong :
 It is the Spirit of Paradise
 That prompts such work, a Spirit strong,
 That gives to all the self-same bent
 Where life is wise and innocent.

18

THE REDBREAST CHASING THE BUTTERFLY

ART thou the bird whom Man loves best,
 The pious bird with the scarlet breast,
 Our little English Robin ;
 The bird that comes about our doors
 When Autumn-winds are sobbing ?
 Art thou the Peter of Norway Boors ?
 Their Thomas in Finland,
 And Russia far inland ?
 The bird that by some name or other
 All men who know thee call their brother,

10

Vain is the glory of the sky,
 The beauty vain of field and grove,
 Unless, while with admiring eye
 We gaze, we also learn to love.

8

THE DANISH BOY

A FRAGMENT.

I.

BETWEEN two sister moorland rills
 There is a spot that seems to lie
 Sacred to flowerets of the hills,
 And sacred to the sky.
 And in this smooth and open dell
 There is a tempest-stricken tree ;
 A corner-stone by lightning cut,
 The last stone of a lonely hut ;
 And in this dell you see
 A thing no storm can e'er destroy,
 The shadow of a Danish Boy.

10

II.

In clouds above, the lark is heard,
 But drops not here to earth for rest ;
 Within this lonesome nook the bird
 Did never build her nest.
 No beast, no bird, hath here his home ;
 Bees, wafted on the breezy air,
 Pass high above those fragrant bells
 To other flowers :—to other dells
 Their burdens do they bear ;
 The Danish Boy walks here alone :
 The lovely dell is all his own.

20

III.

A Spirit of noon-day is he ;
 Yet seems a form of flesh and blood ;
 Nor piping shepherd shall he be,
 Nor herd-boy of the wood.

A regal vest of fur he wears,
In colour like a raven's wing ;
It fears not rain, nor wind, nor dew ;
But in the storm 'tis fresh and blue 30
As budding pines in spring ;
His helmet has a vernal grace,
Fresh as the bloom upon his face.

IV.

A harp is from his shoulder slung ;
Resting the harp upon his knee,
To words of a forgotten tongue
He suits its melody.
Of flocks upon the neighbouring hill
He is the darling and the joy ;
And often, when no cause appears, 40
The mountain-ponies prick their ears,
—They hear the Danish Boy,
While in the dell he sings alone
Beside the tree and corner-stone.

V.

There sits he ; in his face you spy
No trace of a ferocious air,
Nor ever was a cloudless sky
So steady or so fair.
The lovely Danish Boy is blest
And happy in his flowery cove : 50
From bloody deeds his thoughts are far ;
And yet he warbles songs of war,
That seem like songs of love,
For calm and gentle is his mien ;
Like a dead Boy he is serene.

STRAY PLEASURES

*" — Pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find."*

By their floating mill,
That lies dead and still,
Behold yon Prisoners three,
The Miller with two Dames, on the breast of the
Thames !
The platform is small, but gives room for them all ;
And they're dancing merrily.

From the shore come the notes
To their mill where it floats,
To their house and their mill tethered fast : 9
To the small wooden isle where, their work to beguile,
They from morning to even take whatever is given ;—
And many a blithe day they have past.

In sight of the spires,
All alive with the fires
Of the sun going down to his rest.
In the broad open eye of the solitary sky,
They dance,—there are three, as jocund as free,
While they dance on the calm river's breast.

Man and Maidens wheel,
They themselves make the reel, 20
And their music's a prey which they seize ;
It plays not for them,—what matter ? 'tis theirs ;
And if they had care, it has scattered their cares
While they dance, crying, " Long as ye please !"

They dance not for me,
Yet mine is their glee !
Thus pleasure is spread through the earth
In stray gifts to be claimed by whoever shall find ;
Thus a rich loving-kindness, redundantly kind,
Moves all nature to gladness and mirth. 30

The showers of the spring
 Rouse the birds, and they sing ;
 If the wind do but stir for his proper delight,
 Each leaf, that and this, his neighbour will kiss ;
 Each wave, one and t'other, speeds after his brother ;
 They are happy, for that is their right ! 36

LOVE LIES BLEEDING

You call it, " Love lies bleeding,"—so you may,
 Though the red Flower, not prostrate, only droops,
 As we have seen it here from day to day,
 From month to month, life passing not away :
 A flower how rich in sadness ! Even thus stoops,
 (Sentient by Grecian sculpture's marvellous power),
 Thus leans, with hanging brow and body bent
 Earthward in uncomplaining languishment,
 The dying Gladiator. So, sad Flower !
 ('Tis Fancy guides me willing to be led,
 Though by a slender thread,) 10
 So drooped Adonis, bathed in sanguine dew
 Of his death-wound, when he from innocent air
 The gentlest breath of resignation drew ;
 While Venus in a passion of despair
 Rent, weeping over him, her golden hair
 Spangled with drops of that celestial shower.
 She suffered, as Immortals sometimes do ;
 But pangs more lasting far *that* Lover knew
 Who first, weighed down by scorn, in some lone bower
 Did press this semblance of unpitied smart 21
 Into the service of his constant heart,
 His own dejection, downcast Flower ! could share
 With thine, and gave the mournful name which thou
 wilt ever bear.

THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES

THAT way look, my Infant, lo !
 What a pretty baby-show !
 See the Kitten on the wall,
 Sporting with the leaves that fall,
 Withered leaves—one—two—and three—
 From the lofty elder-tree !
 Through the calm and frosty air
 Of this morning bright and fair,
 Eddying round and round they sink
 Softly, slowly : one might think, 10
 From the motions that are made,
 Every little leaf conveyed
 Sylph or Faery hither tending,—
 To this lower world descending,
 Each invisible and mute,
 In his wavering parachute.
 —But the Kitten, how she starts,
 Crouches, stretches, paws, and darts !
 First at one, and then its fellow,
 Just as light and just as yellow ; 20
 There are many now—now one—
 Now they stop and there are none :
 What intenseness of desire
 In her upward eye of fire !
 With a tiger-leap half-way
 Now she meets the coming prey,
 Lets it go as fast, and then
 Has it in her power again :
 Now she works with three or four,
 Like an Indian conjurer ; 30
 Quick as he in feats of art,
 Far beyond in joy of heart.
 Were her antics played in the eye
 Of a thousand standers-by,
 Clapping hands with shout and stare,
 What would little Tabby care

For the plaudits of the crowd ?
 Over happy to be proud,
 Over wealthy in the treasure
 Of her own exceeding pleasure ! 40

'Tis a pretty baby-treat ;
 Nor, I deem, for me unmeet ;
 Here, for neither Babe nor me,
 Other playmate can I see.
 Of the countless living things,
 That with stir of feet and wings
 (In the sun or under shade,
 Upon bough or grassy blade)
 And with busy revellings,
 Chirp and song, and murmurings, 50
 Made this orchard's narrow space,
 And this vale, so blithe a place ;
 Multitudes are swept away
 Never more to breathe the day :
 Some are sleeping ; some in bands
 Travelled into distant lands ;
 Others slunk to moor and wood,
 Far from human neighbourhood ;
 And among the Kinds that keep
 With us closer fellowship, 60
 With us openly abide,
 All have laid their mirth aside.

Where is he that giddy Sprite,
 Blue-cap, with his colours bright,
 Who was blest as bird could be,
 Feeding in the apple-tree ;
 Made such wanton spoil and rout,
 Turning blossoms inside out ;
 Hung—head pointing towards the ground—
 Fluttered, perched, into a round 70
 Bound himself, and then unbound ;
 Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin !
 Prettiest Tumbler ever seen !
 Light of heart and light of limb ;
 What is now become of Him ?

Lambs, that through the mountains went
 Frisking, bleating merriment,
 When the year was in its prime,
 They are sobered by this time.
 If you look to vale or hill, 80
 If you listen, all is still,
 Save a little neighbouring rill,
 That from out the rocky ground
 Strikes a solitary sound.
 Vainly glitter hill and plain,
 And the air is calm in vain ;
 Vainly Morning spreads the lure
 Of a sky serene and pure ;
 Creature none can she decoy
 Into open sign of joy : 90
 Is it that they have a fear
 Of the dreary season near ?
 Or that other pleasures be
 Sweeter even than gaiety ?

Yet, whate'er enjoyments dwell
 In the impenetrable cell
 Of the silent heart which Nature
 Furnishes to every creature ;
 Whatsoe'er we feel and know
 Too sedate for outward show, 100
 Such a light of gladness breaks,
 Pretty Kitten ! from thy freaks,—
 Spreads with such a living grace
 O'er my little Dora's face ;
 Yes, the sight so stirs and charms
 Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,
 That almost I could repine
 That your transports are not mine,
 That I do not wholly fare
 Even as ye do, thoughtless pair ! 110
 And I will have my careless season
 Spite of melancholy reason,
 Will walk through life in such a way
 That, when time brings on decay,

Now and then I may possess
 Hours of perfect gladness.
 —Pleased by any random toy ;
 By a kitten's busy joy,
 Or an infant's laughing eye
 Sharing in the ecstasy ; 120
 I would fare like that or this,
 Find my wisdom in my bliss ;
 Keep the sprightly soul awake,
 And have faculties to take,
 Even from things by sorrow wrought,
 Matter for a jocund thought,
 Spite of care, and spite of grief,
 To gambol with Life's falling Leaf. 128

ADDRESS TO MY INFANT DAUGHTER, DORA,
 ON BEING REMINDED THAT SHE WAS A MONTH OLD
 THAT DAY, SEPTEMBER 16.

—————HAST thou then survived—
 Mild Offspring of infirm humanity,
 Meek Infant ! among all forlornest things
 The most forlorn—one life of that bright star,
 The second glory of the Heavens ?—Thou hast ;
 Already hast survived that great decay,
 That transformation through the wide earth felt,
 And by all nations. In that Being's sight
 From whom the Race of human kind proceed,
 A thousand years are but as yesterday ; 10
 And one day's narrow circuit is to Him
 Not less capacious than a thousand years.
 But what is time ? What outward glory ? Neither
 A measure is of Thee, whose claims extend
 Through "heaven's eternal year."—Yet hail to Thee,
 Frail, feeble, Monthling !—by that name, methinks,
 Thy scanty breathing-time is portioned out
 Not idly.—Hadst thou been of Indian birth,
 Couched on a casual bed of moss and leaves,

And rudely canopied by leafy boughs, 20
Or to the churlish elements exposed
On the blank plains,—the coldness of the night,
Or the night's darkness, or its cheerful face
Of beauty, by the changing moon adorned,
Would, with imperious admonition, then
Have scored thine age, and punctually timed
Thine infant history, on the minds of those
Who might have wandered with thee.—Mother's love,
Nor less than mother's love in other breasts,
Will, among us warm-clad and warmly housed, 30
Do for thee what the finger of the heavens
Doth all too often harshly execute
For thy unblest coevals, amid wilds
Where fancy hath small liberty to grace
The affections, to exalt them or refine ;
And the maternal sympathy itself,
Though strong, is, in the main, a joyless tie
Of naked instinct, wound about the heart.
Happier, far happier is thy lot and ours !
Even now—to solemnise thy helpless state, 40
And to enliven in the mind's regard
Thy passive beauty—parallels have risen,
Resemblances, or contrasts, that connect,
Within the region of a father's thoughts,
Thee and thy mate and sister of the sky.
And first ;—thy sinless progress, through a world
By sorrow darkened and by care disturbed,
Apt likeness bears to hers, through gathered clouds
Moving untouched in silver purity,
And cheering oft-times their reluctant gloom. 50
Fair are ye both, and both are free from stain :
But thou, how leisurely thou fill'st thy horn
With brightness ! leaving her to post along,
And range about, disquieted in change,
And still impatient of the shape she wears.
Once up, once down the hill, one journey, Babe,
That will suffice thee ; and it seems that now
Thou hast foreknowledge that such task is thine ;
Thou travellest so contentedly, and sleep'st

In such a heedless peace. Alas ! full soon 60
 Hath this conception, grateful to behold,
 Changed countenance, like an object sullied o'er
 By breathing mist ; and thine appears to be
 A mournful labour, while to her is given
 Hope, and a renovation without end.
 —That smile forbids the thought ; for on thy face
 Smiles are beginning, like the beams of dawn,
 To shoot and circulate ; smiles have there been seen ;
 Tranquil assurances that Heaven supports
 The feeble motions of thy life, and cheers 70
 Thy loneliness : or shall those smiles be called
 Feelers of love, put forth as if to explore
 This untried world, and to prepare thy way
 Through a strait passage intricate and dim ?
 Such are they ; and the same are tokens, signs,
 Which, when the appointed season hath arrived,
 Joy, as her holiest language, shall adopt ;
 And Reason's godlike Power be proud to own. 78

POEMS OF THE IMAGINATION

THERE WAS A BOY

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well, ye cliffs
And islands of Winander !—many a time,
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake ;
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls, 10
That they might answer him.—And they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call,—with quivering peals,
And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild
Of jocund din ! And, when there came a pause
Of silence such as baffled his best skill :
Then sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice 20
Of mountain-torrents ; or the visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and died
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.

Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale
Where he was born and bred : the churchyard hangs
Upon a slope above the village-school ;
And through that churchyard when my way has led³⁰
On summer-evenings, I believe that there
A long half-hour together I have stood
Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies !

TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer ! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo ! shall I call thee Bird,
Or but a wandering Voice ?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear ;
From hill to hill it seems to pass
At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.¹⁰

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring !
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my schoolboy days
I listened to ; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush, and tree, and sky.²⁰

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green ;
And thou wert still a hope, a love ;
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet ;
 Can lie upon the plain
 And listen, till I do beget
 That golden time again.

O blessed Bird ! the earth we pace
 Again appears to be
 An unsubstantial, faery place ;
 That is fit home for Thee !

30

A NIGHT-PIECE

—————THE sky is overcast
 With a continuous cloud of texture close,
 Heavy and wan, all whitened by the Moon,
 Which through that veil is indistinctly seen,
 A dull, contracted circle, yielding light
 So feebly spread that not a shadow falls,
 Chequering the ground—from rock, plant, tree, or
 tower.

At length a pleasant instantaneous gleam
 Startles the pensive traveller while he treads
 His lonesome path, with unobserving eye 10
 Bent earthwards ; he looks up—the clouds are split
 Asunder,—and above his head he sees
 The clear Moon, and the glory of the heavens.
 There in a black-blue vault she sails along,
 Followed by multitudes of stars, that, small
 And sharp, and bright, along the dark abyss
 Drive as she drives : how fast they wheel away,
 Yet vanish not !—the wind is in the tree,
 But they are silent ;—still they roll along
 Immeasurably distant ; and the vault, 20
 Built round by those white clouds, enormous clouds,
 Still deepens its unfathomable depth.
 At length the Vision closes ; and the mind,
 Not undisturbed by the delight it feels,
 Which slowly settles into peaceful calm,
 Is left to muse upon the solemn scene.

AIREY-FORCE VALLEY

—————Not a breath of air
Ruffles the bosom of this leafy glen.
From the brook's margin, wide around, the trees
Are steadfast as the rocks ; the brook itself,
Old as the hills that feed it from afar,
Doth rather deepen than disturb the calm
Where all things else are still and motionless.
And yet, even now, a little breeze, perchance
Escaped from boisterous winds that rage without,
Has entered, by the sturdy oaks unfelt, 10
But to its gentle touch how sensitive
Is the light ash ! that, pendent from the brow
Of yon dim cave, in seeming silence makes
A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs,
Powerful almost as vocal harmony
To stay the wanderer's steps and soothe his thoughts.

YEW-TREES

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore :
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched
To Scotland's heaths ; or those that crossed the sea
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poitiers.
Of vast circumference and gloom profound
This solitary Tree ! a living thing 10
Produced too slowly ever to decay ;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove ;
Huge trunks ! and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwined fibres serpentine

Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved ;
 Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks
 That threaten the profane ; a pillared shade, 20
 Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
 By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
 Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
 Of boughs, as if for festal purpose decked
 With unrejoicing berries—ghostly Shapes
 May meet at noontide ; Fear and trembling Hope,
 Silence and Foresight ; Death the Skeleton
 And Time the Shadow ;—there to celebrate,
 As in a natural temple scattered o'er
 With altars undisturbed of mossy stone, 30
 United worship ; or in mute repose
 To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
 Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

NUTTING

—————It seems a day
 (I speak of one from many singled out)
 One of those heavenly days that cannot die ;
 When, in the eagerness of boyish hope,
 I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth
 With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,
 A nutting-crook in hand ; and turned my steps
 Tow'rd some far-distant wood, a Figure quaint,
 'Tricked out in proud disguise of cast-off weeds
 Which for that service had been husbanded, 10
 By exhortation of my frugal Dame—
 Motley accoutrement, of power to smile
 At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—and in truth
 More ragged than need was ! O'er pathless rocks,
 Through beds of matted fern, and tangled thickets,
 Forcing my way, I came to one dear nook
 Unvisited, where not a broken bough
 Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
 Of devastation ; but the hazels rose
 Tall and erect, with tempting clusters hung, 20

A virgin scene !—A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart
As joy delights in ; and with wise restraint
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet ;—or beneath the trees I sate
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played ;
A temper known to those who, after long
And weary expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves 30
The violets of five seasons re-appear
And fade, unseen by any human eye ;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
For ever ; and I saw the sparkling foam,
And—with my cheek on one of those green stones
That, fleeced with moss, under the shady trees,
Lay round me, scattered like a flock of sheep—
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound,
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease ; and, of its joy secure, 40
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with
crash
And merciless ravage : and the shady nook
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
Their quiet being : and unless I now
Confound my present feelings with the past,
Ere from the mutilated bower I turned 50
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld
The silent trees, and saw the intruding sky.—
Then, dearest Maiden, move along these shades
In gentleness of heart ; with gentle hand
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

THE SIMPLON PASS

————BROOK and road
 Were fellow-travellers in this gloomy Pass,
 And with them did we journey several hours
 At a slow step. The immeasurable height
 Of woods decaying, never to be decayed,
 The stationary blasts of waterfalls,
 And in the narrow rent, at every turn,
 Winds thwarting winds bewildered and forlorn,
 The torrents shooting from the clear blue sky,
 The rocks that muttered close upon our ears, 10
 Black drizzling crags that spake by the wayside
 As if a voice were in them, the sick sight
 And giddy prospect of the raving stream,
 The unfettered clouds and region of the heavens,
 Tumult and peace, the darkness and the light—
 Were all like workings of one mind, the features
 Of the same face, blossoms upon one tree,
 Characters of the great Apocalypse,
 The types and symbols of Eternity,
 Of first, and last, and midst, and without end. 20

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT

SHE was a Phantom of delight
 When first she gleamed upon my sight ;
 A lovely Apparition, sent
 To be a moment's ornament ;
 Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair ;
 Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
 But all things else about her drawn
 From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;
 A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
 To haunt, to startle, and way-lay. 10

I saw her upon nearer view,
 A Spirit, yet a Woman too !
 Her household motions light and free,
 And steps of virgin-liberty ;

A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet ;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food ;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles. 20

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine ;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A Traveller between life and death ;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill ;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command ;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of angelic light. 30

THE NIGHTINGALE

O NIGHTINGALE ! thou surely art
A creature of a " fiery heart " :—
These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce ;
Tumultuous harmony and fierce !
Thou sing'st as if the God of wine
Had helped thee to a Valentine ;
A song in mockery and despite
Of shades, and dews, and silent night ;
And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves. 10

I heard a Stock-dove sing or say
His homely tale, this very day ;
His voice was buried among trees,
Yet to be come-at by the breeze :
He did not cease ; but cooed—and cooed ;
And somewhat pensively he wooed :

He sang of love, with quiet blending,
Slow to begin, and never ending ;
Of serious faith, and inward glee ;
That was the song—the song for me !

20

THREE YEARS SHE GREW

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, “ A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This Child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A Lady of my own.

“ Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse : and with me
The Girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

10

“ She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

“ The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the Storm
Grace that shall mould the Maiden’s form
By silent sympathy.

20

“ The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

30

“ And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.”

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run !
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be.

40

A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
I had no human fears :
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
She neither hears nor sees ;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees.

THE DAFFODILS

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils ;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay :
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

10

The waves beside them danced ; but they
 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :
 A poet could not but be gay,
 In such a jocund company :
 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
 What wealth the show to me had brought :

For oft, when on my couch I lie
 In vacant or in pensive mood,
 They flash upon that inward eye
 Which is the bliss of solitude ;
 And then my heart with pleasure fills,
 And dances with the daffodils.

20

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
 Hangs a Thrush that sings loud, it has sung for three
 years :

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
 In the silence of morning the song of the Bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her ? She sees
 A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;
 Bright volumes of vapour through Lothbury glide,
 And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
 Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ; 10
 And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
 The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven : but they fade,
 The mist and the river, the hill and the shade :
 The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
 And the colours have all passed away from her eyes !

POWER OF MUSIC

AN Orpheus ! an Orpheus ! yes, Faith may grow bold,
 And take to herself all the wonders of old ;—
 Near the stately Pantheon you'll meet with the same
 In the street that from Oxford hath borrowed its name.

His station is there ; and he works on the crowd,
 He sways them with harmony merry and loud ;
 He fills with his power all their hearts to the brim—
 Was aught ever heard like his fiddle and him ?

What an eager assembly ! what an empire is this !
 The weary have life, and the hungry have bliss ; 10
 The mourner is cheered, and the anxious have rest ;
 And the guilt-burthened soul is no longer oppress.

As the Moon brightens round her the clouds of the
 night,
 So He, where He stands, is a centre of light ;
 It gleams on the face, there, of dusky-browed Jack,
 And the pale-visaged Bakers, with basket on back.

That errand-bound 'Prentice was passing in haste—
 What matter ! he's caught—and his time runs to waste ;
 The Newsman is stopped, though he stops on the fret ;
 And the half-breathless Lamplighter—he's in the
 net ! 20

The Porter sits down on the weight which he bore ;
 The Lass with her barrow wheels hither her store ;—
 If a thief could be here he might pilfer at ease ;
 She sees the Musician, 'tis all that she sees !

He stands, backed by the wall ;—he abates not his din ;
 His hat gives him vigour, with boons dropping in,
 From the old and the young, from the poorest ; and
 there !

The one-pennied Boy has his penny to spare.

O blest are the hearers, and proud be the hand
Of the pleasure it spreads through so thankful a
band ;

30

I am glad for him, blind as he is !—all the while
If they speak 'tis to praise, and they praise with a
smile.

That tall Man, a giant in bulk and in height,
Not an inch of his body is free from delight ;
Can he keep himself still, if he would ? oh, not he !
The music stirs in him like wind through a tree.

Mark that Cripple who leans on his crutch ; like a tower
That long has leaned forward, leans hour after hour !—
That Mother, whose spirit in fetters is bound,
While she dandles the Babe in her arms to the sound.

39

Now, coaches and chariots ! roar on like a stream ;
Here are twenty souls happy as souls in a dream :
They are deaf to your murmurs—they care not for you,
Nor what ye are flying, nor what ye pursue !

STAR-GAZERS

WHAT crowd is this ? what have we here ! we must not
pass it by ;

A Telescope upon its frame, and pointed to the sky :
Long is it as a barber's pole, or mast of little boat,
Some little pleasure-skiff, that doth on Thames's waters
float.

The Showman chooses well his place, 'tis Leicester's
busy Square ;

And is as happy in his night, for the heavens are blue
and fair ;

Calm, though impatient, is the crowd ; each stands
ready with the fee,

And envies him that's looking ;—what an insight must
it be !

Yet, Showman, where can lie the cause ? Shall thy
 Implement have blame,
 A boaster that, when he is tried, fails, and is put to
 shame ? 10
 Or is it good as others are, and be their eyes in fault ?
 Their eyes, or minds ? or, finally, is yon resplendent
 vault ?

Is nothing of that radiant pomp so good as we have
 here ?
 Or gives a thing but small delight that never can be
 dear ?
 The silver moon with all her vales, and hills of mightiest
 fame,
 Doth she betray us when they're seen ? or are they but
 a name ?

Or is it rather that Conceit rapacious is and strong,
 And bounty never yields so much but it seems to do her
 wrong ?
 Or is it that, when human Souls a journey long have had
 And are returned into themselves, they cannot but be
 sad ? 20

Or must we be constrained to think that these Spec-
 tators rude,
 Poor in estate, of manners base, men of the multitude,
 Have souls which never yet have risen, and therefore
 prostrate lie ?
 No, no, this cannot be ;—men thirst for power and
 majesty !

Does, then, a deep and earnest thought the blissful
 mind employ
 Of him who gazes, or has gazed ? a grave and steady
 joy,
 That doth reject all show of pride, admits no outward
 sign,
 Because not of this noisy world, but silent and divine !

Whatever be the cause, 'tis sure that they who pry and
 pore
 Seem to meet with little gain, seem less happy than
 before : 30
 One after One they take their turn, nor have I one
 espied
 That doth not slackly go away, as if dissatisfied.

WRITTEN IN MARCH

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF
 BROTHER'S WATER.

THE Cock is crowing,
 The stream is flowing,
 The small birds twitter,
 The lake doth glitter,
 The green field sleeps in the sun ;
 The oldest and youngest
 Are at work with the strongest ;
 The cattle are grazing,
 Their heads never raising ;
 There are forty feeding like one ! 10

Like an army defeated
 The snow hath retreated,
 And now doth fare ill
 On the top of the bare hill ;
 The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon :
 There's joy in the mountains ;
 There's life in the fountains ;
 Small clouds are sailing,
 Blue sky prevailing ;
 The rain is over and gone ! 20

BEGGARS

SHE had a tall man's height or more ;
 Her face from summer's noontide heat
 No bonnet shaded, but she wore
 A mantle, to her very feet
 Descending with a graceful flow,
 And on her head a cap as white as new-fallen snow.

Her skin was of Egyptian brown :
 Haughty, as if her eye had seen
 Its own light to a distance thrown,
 She towered, fit person for a Queen 10
 To lead those ancient Amazonian files ;
 Or ruling Bandit's wife among the Grecian isles.

Advancing, forth she stretched her hand
 And begged an alms with doleful plea
 That ceased not ; on our English land
 Such woes, I knew, could never be ;
 And yet a boon I gave her, for the creature
 Was beautiful to see—a weed of glorious feature.

I left her, and pursued my way ;
 And soon before me did espy 20
 A pair of little Boys at play,
 Chasing a crimson butterfly ;
 The taller followed with his hat in hand,
 Wreathed round with yellow flowers the gayest of
 the land.

The other wore a rimless crown
 With leaves of laurel stuck about ;
 And while both followed up and down,
 Each whooping with a merry shout,
 In their fraternal features I could trace 29
 Unquestionable lines of that wild Suppliant's face.

Yet *they*, so blithe of heart, seemed fit
 For finest tasks of earth or air :
 Wings let them have, and they might flit
 Precursors to Aurora's car,
 Scattering fresh flowers ; though happier far, I ween,
 To hunt their fluttering game o'er rock and level
 green.

They dart across my path—but lo,
 Each ready with a plaintive whine !
 Said I, “ not half an hour ago
 Your Mother has had alms of mine.” 40
 “ That cannot be,” one answered—“ she is dead :”—
 I looked reproof—they saw—but neither hung his head.

“ She has been dead, Sir, many a day.”—
 “ Hush, boys ! you're telling me a lie ;
 It was your Mother, as I say !”
 And, in the twinkling of an eye,
 “ Come ! come !” cried one, and without more ado
 Off to some other play the joyous Vagrants flew ! 48

SEQUEL TO THE FOREGOING

COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER.

WHERE are they now, those wanton Boys ?
 For whose free range the dædal earth
 Was filled with animated toys,
 And implements of frolic mirth ;
 With tools for ready wit to guide ;
 And ornaments of seemlier pride,
 More fresh, more bright, than princes wear ;
 For what one moment flung aside,
 Another could repair ;
 What good or evil have they seen 10
 Since I their pastime witnessed here,
 Their daring wiles, their sportive cheer ?
 I ask—but all is dark between !

They met me in a genial hour,
 When universal nature breathed
 As with the breath of one sweet flower,—
 A time to overrule the power
 Of discontent, and check the birth
 Of thoughts with better thoughts at strife,
 The most familiar bane of life 20
 Since parting Innocence bequeathed
 Mortality to Earth !
 Soft clouds, the whitest of the year,
 Sailed through the sky—the brooks ran clear ;
 The lambs from rock to rock were bounding ;
 With songs the budded groves resounding ;
 And to my heart are still endeared
 The thoughts with which it then was cheered ;
 The faith which saw that gladsome pair
 Walk through the fire with unsinged hair. 30
 Or, if such faith must needs deceive—
 Then, Spirits of beauty and of grace,
 Associates in that eager chase ;
 Ye, who within the blameless mind
 Your favourite seat of empire find—
 Kind Spirits ! may we not believe
 That they, so happy and so fair
 Through your sweet influence, and the care
 Of pitying Heaven, at least were free
 From touch of *deadly* injury ? 40
 Destined, whate'er their earthly doom,
 For mercy and immortal bloom ?

GIPSIES

YET are they here the same unbroken knot
 Of human Beings, in the self-same spot !
 Men, women, children, yea the frame
 Of the whole spectacle the same !
 Only their fire seems bolder, yielding light,
 Now deep and red, the colouring of night ;
 That on their Gipsy-faces falls,
 Their bed of straw and blanket-walls.

—Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours are gone,
while I

Have been a traveller under open sky, 10
Much witnessing of change and cheer,
Yet as I left I find them here !

The weary Sun betook himself to rest ;—
Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,
Outshining like a visible God

The glorious path in which he trod.
And now, ascending, after one dark hour
And one night's diminution of her power,
Behold the mighty Moon ! this way 20
She looks as if at them—but they

Regard not her :—oh, better wrong and strife
(By nature transient) than this torpid life ;
Life which the very stars reprove
As on their silent tasks they move !

Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth !
In scorn I speak not ;—they are what their birth
And breeding suffer them to be ;
Wild outcasts of society ! 28

RUTH

WHEN Ruth was left half desolate,
Her Father took another Mate ;
And Ruth, not seven years old.
A slighted child, at her own will
Went wandering over dale and hill,
In thoughtless freedom, bold.

And she had made a pipe of straw,
And music from that pipe could draw
Like sounds of winds and floods ;
Had built a bower upon the green, 10
As if she from her birth had been
An infant of the woods.

Beneath her father's roof, alone
She seemed to live ; her thoughts her own ;
Herself her own delight ;
Pleased with herself, nor sad, nor gay ;
And, passing thus the live-long day,
She grew to woman's height.

There came a Youth from Georgia's shore—
A military casque he wore, 20
With splendid feathers drest ;
He brought them from the Cherokees ;
The feathers nodded in the breeze,
And made a gallant crest.

From Indian blood you deem him sprung :
But no ! he spake the English tongue,
And bore a soldier's name ;
And, when America was free
From battle and from jeopardy,
He 'cross the ocean came. 30

With hues of genius on his cheek
In finest tones the Youth could speak :
—While he was yet a boy,
The moon, the glory of the sun,
And streams that murmur as they run,
Had been his dearest joy.

He was a lovely Youth ! I guess
The panther in the wilderness
Was not so fair as he ;
And, when he chose to sport and play, 40
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.

Among the Indians he had fought,
And with him many tales he brought
Of pleasure and of fear ;
Such tales as told to any maid
By such a Youth, in the green shade,
Were perilous to hear.

He told of girls—a happy rout !
Who quit their fold with dance and shout, 50
Their pleasant Indian town,
To gather strawberries all day long ;
Returning with a choral song
When daylight is gone down.

He spake of plants that hourly change
Their blossoms, through a boundless range
Of intermingling hues ;
With budding, fading, faded flowers
They stand the wonder of the bowers 60
From morn to evening dews.

He told of the magnolia, spread
High as a cloud, high over head !
The cypress and her spire ;
—Of flowers that with one scarlet gleam
Cover a hundred leagues, and seem
To set the hills on fire.

The Youth of green savannahs spake,
And many an endless, endless lake,
With all its fairy crowds
Of islands, that together lie 70
As quietly as spots of sky
Among the evening clouds.

“ How pleasant,” then he said, “ it were
A fisher or a hunter there,
In sunshine or in shade
To wander with an easy mind ;
And build a household fire, and find
A home in every glade !

“ What days and what bright years ! Ah me !
Our life were life indeed, with thee 80
So passed in quiet bliss,
And all the while,” said he, “ to know
That we were in a world of woe,
On such an earth as this !”

And then he sometimes interwove
Fond thoughts about a father's love :
" For there," said he, " are spun
Around the heart such tender ties,
That our own children to our eyes
Are dearer than the sun.

90

" Sweet Ruth ! and could you go with me
My helpmate in the woods to be,
Our shed at night to rear ;
Or run, my own adopted bride,
A sylvan huntress at my side,
And drive the flying deer !

" Beloved Ruth !" — No more he said.
The wakeful Ruth at midnight shed
A solitary tear :
She thought again—and did agree
With him to sail across the sea,
And drive the flying deer.

100

" And now, as fitting is and right,
We in the church our faith will plight,
A husband and a wife."
Even so they did ; and I may say
That to sweet Ruth that happy day
Was more than human life.

Through dream and vision did she sink,
Delighted all the while to think
That on those lonesome floods,
And green savannahs, she should share
His board with lawful joy, and bear
His name in the wild woods.

110

But, as you have before been told,
This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
And, with his dancing crest,
So beautiful, through savage lands
Had roamed about, with vagrant bands
Of Indians in the West.

120

The wind, the tempest roaring high,
The tumult of a tropic sky,
Might well be dangerous food
For him, a Youth to whom was given
So much of earth—so much of heaven,
And such impetuous blood.

Whatever in those climes he found
Irregular in sight or sound
Did to his mind impart
A kindred impulse, seemed allied
To his own powers, and justified
The workings of his heart.

130

Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
The beauteous forms of nature wrought,
Fair trees and gorgeous flowers ;
The breezes their own languor lent ;
The stars had feelings, which they sent
Into those favoured bowers.

Yet, in his worst pursuits I ween
That sometimes there did intervene
Pure hopes of high intent :
For passions linked to forms so fair
And stately needs must have their share
Of noble sentiment.

140

But ill he lived, much evil saw,
With men to whom no better law
Nor better life was known ;
Deliberately, and undeceived,
Those wild men's vices he received,
And gave them back his own.

150

His genius and his moral frame
Were thus impaired, and he became
The slave of low desires :
A Man who without self-control
Would seek what the degraded soul
Unworthily admires.

And yet he with no feigned delight
Had wooed the Maiden, day and night
Had loved her, night and morn :
What could he less than love a Maid 160
Whose heart with so much nature played ?
So kind and so forlorn !

Sometimes, most earnestly, he said,
“ O Ruth ! I have been worse than dead ;
False thoughts, thoughts bold and vain,
Encompassed me on every side
When I, in confidence and pride,
Had crossed the Atlantic main.

“ Before me shone a glorious world—
Fresh as a banner bright, unfurled 170
To music suddenly :
I looked upon those hills and plains,
And seemed as if let loose from chains,
To live at liberty.

“ No more of this ; for now, by thee,
Dear Ruth ! more happily set free
With nobler zeal I burn ;
My soul from darkness is released,
Like the whole sky when to the east
The morning doth return.” 180

Full soon that better mind was gone :
No hope, no wish remained, not one,—
They stirred him now no more ;
New objects did new pleasure give,
And once again he wished to live
As lawless as before.

Meanwhile, as thus with him it fared,
They for the voyage were prepared,
And went to the sea-shore,
But, when they thither came, the Youth 190
Deserted his poor Bride, and Ruth
Could never find him more.

God help thee, Ruth !—Such pains she had,
That she in half a year was mad,
And in a prison housed ;
And there, with many a doleful song
Made of wild words, her cup of wrong
She fearfully caroused.

Yet sometimes milder hours she knew,
Nor wanted sun, nor rain, nor dew, 200
Nor pastimes of the May ;
—They all were with her in her cell ;
And a clear brook with cheerful knell
Did o'er the pebbles play.

When Ruth three seasons thus had lain,
There came a respite to her pain ;
She from her prison fled ;
But of the Vagrant none took thought ;
And where it liked her best she sought
Her shelter and her bread. 210

Among the fields she breathed again :
The master-current of her brain
Ran permanent and free ;
And, coming to the Banks of Tone,
There did she rest ; and dwell alone
Under the greenwood tree.

The engines of her pain, the tools
That shaped her sorrow, rocks and pools,
And airs that gently stir
The vernal leaves—she loved them still ; 220
Nor ever taxed them with the ill
Which had been done to her.

A Barn her *winter* bed supplies ;
But, till the warmth of summer skies
And summer days is gone,
(And all do in this tale agree)
She sleeps beneath the greenwood tree,
And other home hath none.

An innocent life, yet far astray !
And Ruth will, long before her day, 230
Be broken down and old :
Sore aches she needs must have ! but less
Of mind than body's wretchedness,
From damp, and rain, and cold.

If she is prest by want of food,
She from her dwelling in the wood
Repairs to a road-side ;
And there she begs at one steep place
Where up and down with easy pace
The horsemen-travellers ride. 240

That oaten pipe of hers is mute,
Or thrown away ; but with a flute
Her loneliness she cheers :
This flute, made of a hemlock stalk,
At evening in his homeward walk
The Quantock woodman hears.

I, too, have passed her on the hills
Setting her little water-mills
By spouts and fountains wild—
Such small machinery as she turned 250
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,
A young and happy Child !

Farewell ! and when thy days are told,
Ill-fated Ruth, in hallowed mould
Thy corpse shall buried be,
For thee a funeral bell shall ring,
And all the congregation sing
A Christian psalm for thee.

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE

I.

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night ;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods ;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright ;
The birds are singing in the distant woods ;
Over his own sweet voice the Stock-dove broods ;
The Jay makes answer as the Magpie chatters ;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

II.

All things that love the sun are out of doors ;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth ;
The grass is bright with rain-drops ;—on the moors 10
The hare is running races in her mirth ;
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist ; that, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way, wherever she doth run.

III.

I was a Traveller then upon the moor ;
I saw the hare that raced about with joy ;
I heard the woods and distant waters roar ;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy :
The pleasant season did my heart employ :
My old remembrances went from me wholly ; 20
And all the ways of men, so vain and melancholy.

IV.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight
In our dejection do we sink as low ;
To me that morning did it happen so ;
And fears and fancies thick upon me came ;
Dim sadness—and blind thoughts, I knew not, nor
could name.

V.

I heard the sky-lark warbling in the sky ;
 And I bethought me of the playful hare : 30
 Even such a happy Child of earth am I ;
 Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;
 Far from the world I walk, and from all care ;
 But there may come another day to me—
 Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty.

VI.

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
 As if life's business were a summer mood ;
 As if all needful things would come unsought
 To genial faith, still rich in genial good ;
 But how can He expect that others should 40
 Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
 Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all ?

VII.

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
 The sleepless Soul that perished in his pride ;
 Of Him who walked in glory and in joy
 Following his plough, along the mountain-side :
 By our own spirits are we deified :
 We Poets in our youth begin in gladness ;
 But thereof come in the end despondency and madness.

VIII.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace, 50
 A leading from above, a something given,
 Yet it befell that, in this lonely place,
 When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
 Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
 I saw a Man before me unawares :
 The oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs.

IX.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;
Wonder to all who do the same espy, 59
By what means it could thither come, and whence ;
So that it seems a thing endued with sense :
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
Of rock or sand repositeth, there to sun itself ;

X.

Such seemed this Man, not all alive nor dead,
Nor all asleep—in his extreme old age :
His body was bent double, feet and head
Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage 69
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

XI.

Himself he propped, limbs, body, and pale face,
Upon a long grey staff of shaven wood :
And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
Upon the margin of that moorish flood
Motionless as a cloud the old Man stood,
That heareth not the loud winds when they call ;
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

XII.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he conned, 80
As if he had been reading in a book :
And now a stranger's privilege I took ;
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
“This morning gives us promise of a glorious day.”

XIII.

A gentle answer did the old Man make,
 In courteous speech which forth he slowly drew :
 And him with further words I thus bespake,
 " What occupation do you there pursue ?
 This is a lonesome place for one like you."
 Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprise
 Broke from the sable orbs of his yet-vivid eyes.

90

XIV.

His words came feebly, from a feeble chest,
 But each in solemn order followed each,
 With something of a lofty utterance drest—
 Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach
 Of ordinary men ; a stately speech ;
 Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,
 Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

XV.

He told, that to these waters he had come
 To gather leeches, being old and poor : 100
 Employment hazardous and wearisome !
 And he had many hardships to endure :
 From pond to pond he roamed, from moor to moor ;
 Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance ;
 And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

XVI.

The old Man still stood talking by my side ;
 But now his voice to me was like a stream
 Scarce heard ; nor word from word could I divide ;
 And the whole body of the Man did seem
 Like one whom I had met with in a dream ; 110
 Or like a man from some far region sent,
 To give me human strength, by apt admonishment.

XVII.

My former thoughts returned : the fear that kills ;
 And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;
 Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills ;
 And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
 —Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
 My question eagerly did I renew,
 “How is it that you live, and what is it you do ?”

XVIII.

He with a smile did then his words repeat ; 120
 And said that, gathering leeches, far and wide
 He travelled ; stirring thus about his feet
 The waters of the pools where they abide.
 “Once I could meet with them on every side ;
 But they have dwindled long by slow decay ;
 Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.”

XIX.

While he was talking thus, the lonely place.
 The old Man's shape, and speech—all troubled me :
 In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
 About the weary moors continually, 130
 Wandering about alone and silently.
 While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
 He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

XX.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
 Cheerfully uttered, with demeanour kind,
 But stately in the main ; and, when he ended,
 I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
 In that decrepit Man so firm a mind.
 “God,” said I, “be my help and stay secure ; 139
 I'll think of the Leech-gatherer on the lonely moor!”

THE THORN

I.

"THERE is a Thorn—it looks so old,
 In truth, you'd find it hard to say
 How it could ever have been young,
 It looks so old and grey.
 Not higher than a two years' child
 It stands erect, this aged Thorn ;
 No leaves it has, no prickly points ;
 It is a mass of knotted joints,
 A wretched thing forlorn.
 It stands erect, and like a stone
 With lichens is it overgrown.

10

II.

"Like rock or stone, it is o'ergrown,
 With lichens to the very top,
 And hung with heavy tufts of moss,
 A melancholy crop :
 Up from the earth these mosses creep,
 And this poor Thorn they clasp it round
 So close, you'd say that they are bent
 With plain and manifest intent
 To drag it to the ground ;
 And all have joined in one endeavour
 To bury this poor Thorn for ever.

20

III.

"High on a mountain's highest ridge,
 Where oft the stormy winter gale
 Cuts like a scythe, while through the clouds
 It sweeps from vale to vale ;
 Not five yards from the mountain path,
 This Thorn you on your left espy ;
 And to the left, three yards beyond,
 You see a little muddy pond
 Of water—never dry,
 Though but of compass small, and bare
 To thirsty suns and parching air.

30

IV.

" And, close beside this aged Thorn,
 There is a fresh and lovely sight,
 A beauteous heap, a hill of moss,
 Just half a foot in height.
 All lovely colours there you see,
 All colours that were ever seen ;
 And mossy network too is there,
 As if by hand of lady fair
 The work had woven been ;
 And cups, the darlings of the eye,
 So deep is their vermilion dye.

40

V.

" Ah me ! what lovely tints are there
 Of olive green and scarlet bright,
 In spikes, in branches, and in stars,
 Green, red, and pearly white !
 This heap of earth o'ergrown with moss,
 Which close beside the Thorn you see,
 So fresh in all its beauteous dyes,
 Is like an infant's grave in size,
 As like as like can be :
 But never, never anywhere,
 An infant's grave was half so fair.

50

VI.

" Now would you see this aged Thorn,
 This pond, and beauteous hill of moss,
 You must take care and choose your time
 The mountain when to cross.
 For oft there sits between the heap,
 So like an infant's grave in size,
 And that same pond of which I spoke,
 A Woman in a scarlet cloak,
 And to herself she cries,
 ' Oh misery ! oh misery !
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery !'

60

VII.

“ At all times of the day and night
This wretched Woman thither goes ;
And she is known to every star,
And every wind that blows ;
And there, beside the Thorn, she sits
When the blue daylight's in the skies,
And when the whirlwind's on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still,
And to herself she cries,
' Oh misery ! oh misery !
Oh woe is me ! oh misery ! ' ”

70

VIII.

“ Now wherefore, thus, by day and night,
In rain, in tempest, and in snow,
Thus to the dreary mountain-top
Does this poor Woman go ?
And why sits she beside the Thorn
When the blue daylight's in the sky
Or when the whirlwind's on the hill,
Or frosty air is keen and still,
And wherefore does she cry ?—
O wherefore ? wherefore ? tell me why
Does she repeat that doleful cry ? ”

80

IX.

“ I cannot tell ; I wish I could ;
For the true reason no one knows :
But would you gladly view the spot,
The spot to which she goes ;
The hillock like an infant's grave,
The pond—and Thorn, so old and grey ;
Pass by her door—'tis seldom shut—
And if you see her in her hut—
Then to the spot away !
I never heard of such as dare
Approach the spot when she is there.”

90

X.

" But wherefore to the mountain-top 100
 Can this unhappy Woman go,
 Whatever star is in the skies,
 Whatever wind may blow ?"
 " Full twenty years are past and gone
 Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
 Gave with a maiden's true good-will
 Her company to Stephen Hill ;
 And she was blithe and gay,
 While friends and kindred all approved
 Of him whom tenderly she loved. 110

XI.

" And they had fixed the wedding day,
 The morning that must wed them both ;
 But Stephen to another Maid
 Had sworn another oath ;
 And, with this other Maid, to church
 Unthinking Stephen went—
 Poor Martha ! on that woeful day
 A pang of pitiless dismay
 Into her soul was sent ;
 A fire was kindled in her breast, 120
 Which might not burn itself to rest.

XII.

" They say, full six months after this,
 While yet the summer leaves were green,
 She to the mountain-top would go,
 And there was often seen.
 What could she seek ?—or wish to hide ?
 Her state to any eye was plain ;
 She was with child, and she was mad ;
 Yet often was she sober sad
 From her exceeding pain. 130
 O guilty Father—would that death
 Had saved him from that breach of faith !

XIII.

“ Sad case for such a brain to hold
Communion with a stirring child !
Sad case, as you may think, for one
Who had a brain so wild !
Last Christmas-eve we talked of this,
And grey-haired Wilfred of the glen
Held that the unborn infant wrought
About its mother’s heart, and brought 140
Her senses back again :
And, when at last her time drew near,
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

XIV.

“ More know I not, I wish I did,
And it should all be told to you ;
For what became of this poor child
No mortal ever knew ;
Nay—if a child to her was born
No earthly tongue could ever tell ;
And if ’twas born alive or dead. 150
Far less could this with proof be said ;
But some remember well
That Martha Ray about this time
Would up the mountain often climb.

XV.

“ And all that winter, when at night
The wind blew from the mountain-peak,
’Twas worth your while, though in the dark,
The churchyard path to seek :
For many a time and oft were heard
Cries coming from the mountain head : 160
Some plainly living voices were ;
And others, I’ve heard many swear,
Were voices of the dead :
I cannot think, whate’er they say,
They had to do with Martha Ray.

XVI.

“ But that she goes to this old Thorn,
The Thorn which I described to you,
And there sits in a scarlet cloak,
I will be sworn is true.

For one day with my telescope,
To view the ocean wide and bright,
When to this country first I came,
Ere I had heard of Martha's name,
I climbed the mountain's height :—
A storm came on, and I could see
No object higher than my knee.

170

XVII.

“ 'Twas mist and rain, and storm and rain :
No screen, no fence could I discover ;
And then the wind ! in sooth, it was
A wind full ten times over.

I looked around, I thought I saw
A jutting crag,—and off I ran,
Head-foremost, through the driving rain,
The shelter of the crag to gain ;
And, as I am a man,
Instead of jutting crag I found
A Woman seated on the ground.

180

XVIII.

“ I did not speak—I saw her face ;
Her face !—it was enough for me ;
I turned about and heard her cry,
‘ Oh misery ! oh misery !’
And there she sits, until the moon
Through half the clear blue sky will go ;
And when the little breezes make
The waters of the pond to shake,
As all the country know,
She shudders, and you hear her cry,
‘ Oh misery ! oh misery !’ ”

190

XIX.

“ But what’s the Thorn ? and what the pond ?
And what the hill of moss to her ? 200
And what the creeping breeze that comes
The little pond to stir ?”
“ I cannot tell ; but some will say
She hanged her baby on the tree ;
Some say she drowned it in the pond,
Which is a little step beyond :
But all and each agree,
The little Babe was buried there,
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XX.

“ I’ve heard, the moss is spotted red 210
With drops of that poor infant’s blood ;
But kill a new-born infant thus,
I do not think she could !
Some say if to the pond you go,
And fix on it a steady view,
The shadow of a babe you trace,
A baby and a baby’s face,
And that it looks at you ;
Whene’er you look on it, ’tis plain
The baby looks at you again. 220

XXI.

“ And some had sworn an oath that she
Should be to public justice brought ;
And for the little infant’s bones
With spades they would have sought.
But instantly the hill of moss
Before their eyes began to stir !
And, for full fifty yards around,
The grass—it shook upon the ground !
Yet all do still aver
The little Babe lies buried there, 230
Beneath that hill of moss so fair.

XXII.

" I cannot tell how this may be,
 But plain it is the Thorn is bound
 With heavy tufts of moss that strive
 To drag it to the ground ;
 And this I know, full many a time,
 When she was on the mountain high,
 By day, and in the silent night,
 When all the stars shone clear and bright,
 That I have heard her cry,
 ' Oh misery ! oh misery !
 Oh woe is me ! oh misery ! ' "

240

HART-LEAP WELL

Hart-Leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askrigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable Chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second Part of the following Poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.

THE Knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor
 With the slow motion of a summer's cloud,
 And now, as he approached a vassal's door,
 " Bring forth another horse ! " he cried aloud.

" Another horse ! "—That shout the vassal heard
 And saddled his best Steed, a comely grey ;
 Sir Walter mounted him ; he was the third
 Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes ;
 The horse and horseman are a happy pair ;
 But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,
 There is a doleful silence in the air.

70

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's Hall,
 That as they galloped made the echoes roar ;
 But horse and man are vanished, one and all ;
 Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain :
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain. 20

The Knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on
With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern ;
But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one by one,
The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race ?
The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?
—This chase it looks not like an earthly chase ;
Sir Walter and the Hart are left alone.

The poor Hart toils along the mountain-side ;
I will not stop to tell how far he fled, 30
Nor will I mention by what death he died ;
But now the Knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn ;
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy :
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat ;
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned ;
And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet. 40

Upon his side the Hart was lying stretched :
His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,
And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched
The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
(Never had living man such joyful lot !)
Sir Walter walked all round, north, south, and west,
And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill—(it was at least
Four roods of sheer ascent) Sir Walter found 50
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted Beast
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till now
Such sight was never seen by human eyes :
Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

"I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,
And a small arbour, made for rural joy ;
'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot,
A place of love for damsels that are coy. 60

"A cunning artist will I have to frame
A basin for that fountain in the dell !
And they who do make mention of the same,
From this day forth, shall call it HART-LEAP WELL.

"And, gallant Stag ! to make thy praises known,
Another monument shall here be raised ;
Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

"And in the summer-time, when days are long,
I will come hither with my Paramour ; 70
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

"Till the foundations of the mountains fail
My mansion with its arbour shall endure ;—
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
And them who dwell among the woods of Ure !"

Then home he went, and left the Hart stone-dead,
With breathless nostrils stretched above the spring.
—Soon did the Knight perform what he had said ;
And far and wide the fame thereof did ring. 80

Ere thrice the Moon into her port had steered,
A cup of stone received the living well ;
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,
And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And, near the fountain, flowers of stature tall
With trailing plants and trees were intertwined,—
Which soon composed a little sylvan hall,
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long,
Sir Walter led his wondering Paramour ; 90
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The Knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
And his bones lie in his paternal vale.—
But there is matter for a second rhyme,
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND

The moving accident is not my trade ;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts. 100

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square ;
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine :
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,
I saw three pillars standing in a line,—
The last stone-pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were grey, with neither arms nor head ;
Half wasted the square mound of tawny green ;
So that you just might say, as then I said, 111
“ Here in old time the hand of man hath been.”

I looked upon the hill both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey ;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,
And Nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,
Came up the hollow :—him did I accost,
And what this place might be I then enquired. 120

The Shepherd stopped, and that same story told
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.
“ A jolly place,” said he, “ in times of old !
But something ails it now : the spot is curst.

“ You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood—
Some say that they are beeches, others elms—
These were the bower ; and here a mansion stood,
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

“ The arbour does its own condition tell ;
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream ; 130
But as to the great Lodge ! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.

“ There's neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.

“ Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood : but, for my part,
I've guessed, when I've been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy Hart. 140

“ What thoughts must through the creature's brain
have past !
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds—and look, Sir, at this last—
O Master ! it has been a cruel leap.

“ For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the Hart might have to love this place,
And come and make his death-bed near the well.

“ Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by the fountain in the summer-tide ; 150
This water was perhaps the first he drank
When he had wandered from his mother’s side.

“ In April here beneath the flowering thorn
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;
And he perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

“ Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade ;
The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;
So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are gone.” 160

“ Grey-headed Shepherd, thou hast spoken well ;
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine :
This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

“ The Being that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

“ The pleasure-house is dust :—behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom ; 170
But Nature, in due course of time, once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

“ She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known ;
But at the coming of the milder day
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

“ One lesson, Shepherd, let us two divide,
 Taught both by what she shows, and what conceals ;
 Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
 With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.” 180

SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE,

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD, THE
 SHEPHERD, TO THE ESTATES AND HONOURS OF
 HIS ANCESTORS.

HIGH in the breathless Hall the Minstrel sate,
 And Emont's murmur mingled with the Song.—
 The words of ancient time I thus translate,
 A festal strain that hath been silent long :—

“ From town to town, from tower to tower,
 The red rose is the gladsome flower.
 Her thirty years of winter past,
 The red rose is revived at last ;
 She lifts her head for endless spring,
 For everlasting blossoming : 10
 Both roses flourish, red and white :
 In love and sisterly delight
 The two that were at strife are blended,
 And all old troubles now are ended.—
 Joy ! joy to both ! but most to her
 Who is the flower of Lancaster !
 Behold her how She smiles to-day
 On this great throng, this bright array !
 Fair greeting doth she send to all
 From every corner of the hall ; 20
 But chiefly from above the board
 Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
 A Clifford to his own restored !

“ They came with banner, spear, and shield ;
 And it was proved in Bosworth-field.
 Not long the Avenger was withstood—
 Earth helped him with the cry of blood :

St. George was for us, and the might
Of blessed Angels crowned the right.
Loud voice the Land has uttered forth,
We loudest in the faithful north :
Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;
Our strong-abodes and castles see
The glory of their loyalty.

30

"How glad is Skipton at this hour—
 Though lonely, a deserted Tower ;
 Knight, squire, and yeoman, page and groom :
 We have them at the feast of Brough'm.
 How glad Pendragon—though the sleep 40
 Of years be on her !—She shall reap
 A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
 As in a dream her own renewing.
 Rejoiced is Brough, right glad, I deem,
 Beside her little humble stream ;
 And she that keepeth watch and ward
 Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;
 They both are happy at this hour,
 Though each is but a lonely Tower :—
 But here is perfect joy and pride 50
 For one fair House by Emont's side,
 This day, distinguished without peer,
 To see her Master and to cheer—
 Him, and his Lady-mother dear !

“ Oh ! it was a time forlorn
When the fatherless was born—
Give her wings that she may fly,
Or she sees her infant die !
Swords that are with slaughter wild
Hunt the Mother and the Child.
Who will take them from the light ?
—Yonder is a man in sight—
Yonder is a house—but where ?
No, they must not enter there.

To the caves, and to the brooks,
 To the clouds of heaven she looks ;
 She is speechless, but her eyes
 Pray in ghostly agonies.
 Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
 Maid and Mother undefiled,
 Save a Mother and her Child !

70

“ Now Who is he that bounds with joy
 On Carrock’s side, a Shepherd-boy ?
 No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass
 Light as the wind along the grass.
 Can this be He who hither came
 In secret, like a smothered flame ?
 O’er whom such thankful tears were shed
 For shelter, and a poor man’s bread !
 God loves the Child ; and God hath willed
 That those dear words should be fulfilled,
 The Lady’s words, when forced away
 The last she to her Babe did say :
 ‘ My own, my own, thy Fellow-guest
 I may not be ; but rest thee, rest,
 For lowly shepherd’s life is best !’

80

“ Alas ! when evil men are strong
 No life is good, no pleasure long.
 The Boy must part from Mosedale’s groves,
 And leave Blencathara’s rugged coves,
 And quit the flowers that summer brings
 To Glenderamakin’s lofty springs ;
 Must vanish, and his careless cheer
 Be turned to heaviness and fear.
 —Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise !
 Hear it, good man, old in days !
 Thou tree of covert and of rest
 For this young Bird that is distress ;
 Among thy branches safe he lay,
 And he was free to sport and play,
 When falcons were abroad for prey.

90

100

" A recreant harp, that sings of fear
 And heaviness in Clifford's ear !
 I said, when evil men are strong,
 No life is good, no pleasure long,
 A weak and cowardly untruth !
 Our Clifford was a happy Youth,
 And thankful through a weary time,
 That brought him up to manhood's prime.
 —Again he wanders forth at will, 110
 And tends a flock from hill to hill :
 His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen
 Such garb with such a noble mien ;
 Among the shepherd-grooms no mate
 Hath he, a Child of strength and state !
 Yet lacks not friends for simple glee,
 Nor yet for higher sympathy.
 To his side the fallow-deer
 Came, and rested without fear ;
 The eagle, lord of land and sea, 120
 Stooped down to pay him fealty ;
 And both the undying fish that swim
 Through Bowscale-tarn did wait on him ;
 The pair were servants of his eye
 In their immortality ;
 And glancing, gleaming, dark or bright,
 Moved to and fro, for his delight.
 He knew the rocks which Angels haunt
 Upon the mountains visitant ;
 He hath kenned them taking wing : 130
 And into caves where Faeries sing
 He hath entered ; and been told
 By Voices how men lived of old.
 Among the heavens his eye can see
 The face of thing that is to be ;
 And, if that men report him right,
 His tongue could whisper words of might.
 —Now another day is come,
 Fitter hope, and nobler doom ;
 He hath thrown aside his crook, 140
 And hath buried deep his book ;

Armour rusting in his halls
 On the blood of Clifford calls ;—
 ‘ Quell the Scot,’ exclaims the Lance—
 Bear me to the heart of France,
 Is the longing of the Shield—
 Tell thy name, thou trembling Field ;
 Field of death, where’er thou be,
 Groan thou with our victory !
 Happy day, and mighty hour, 150
 When our Shepherd in his power,
 Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
 To his ancestors restored
 Like a re-appearing Star,
 Like a glory from afar,
 First shall head the flock of war !”

Alas ! the impassioned minstrel did not know
 How, by Heaven’s grace, this Clifford’s heart was
 framed :

How he, long forced in humble walks to go,
 Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed. 160

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;
 His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
 The silence that is in the starry sky,
 The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the Race,
 Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts were dead :
 Nor did he change ; but kept in lofty place
 The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage-hearth ;
 The Shepherd-lord was honoured more and more ;
 And, ages after he was laid in earth, 171
 “ The good Lord Clifford ” was the name he bore.

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON
REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A
TOUR. JULY 13, 1798.

FIVE years have past ; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters ! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur.¹—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose
Here, under this dark sycamore, and view 10
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild : these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees !
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods, 20
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration :—feelings too 30

¹ The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above Tintern.

Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,
 As have no slight or trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life,
 His little, nameless, unremembered acts
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,
 In which the burthen of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world,
 Is lightened :—that serene and blessed mood.
 In which the affections gently lead us on,—
 Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul :
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

40

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft—
 In darkness and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
 O sylvan Wye ! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
 How often has my spirit turned to thee !

50

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
 With many recognitions dim and faint,
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
 The picture of the mind revives again :
 While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
 That in this moment there is life and food
 For future years. And so I dare to hope,
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
 I came among these hills ; when like a roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides

60

Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
 Wherever nature led : more like a man 70
 Flying from something that he dreads than one
 Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by)
 To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
 What then I was. The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
 Their colours and their forms, were then to me
 An appetite ; a feeling and a love, 80
 That had no need of a remoter charm,
 By thought supplied, nor any interest
 Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
 And all its aching joys are now no more,
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur ; other gifts
 Have followed ; for such loss, I would believe,
 Abundant recompense. For I have learned
 To look on nature, not as in the hour
 Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes 90
 The still, sad music of humanity,
 Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
 A motion and a spirit, that impels 100
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains ; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
 Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,¹

¹ This line has a close resemblance to an admirable line of Young's, the exact expression of which I do not recollect.

And what perceive ; well pleased to recognise
 In nature and the language of the sense
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
 Of all my moral being.

110

Nor perchance,

If I were not thus taught, should I the more
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
 For thou art with me here upon the banks
 Of this fair river ; thou my dearest Friend,
 My dear, dear Friend ; and in thy voice I catch
 The language of my former heart, and read
 My former pleasures in the shooting lights
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while
 May I behold in thee what I was once,
 My dear, dear Sister ! and this prayer I make,
 Knowing that Nature never did betray
 The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead
 From joy to joy : for she can so inform
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
 Rash judgements, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;
 And let the misty mountain-winds be free
 To blow against thee : and, in after years,
 When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
 Into a sober pleasure ; when thy mind
 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
 Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
 For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
 Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,

120

130

140

And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance—
 If I should be where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
 Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
 That on the banks of this delightful stream 150
 We stood together ; and that I, so long
 A worshipper of Nature, hither came
 Unwearied in that service : rather say
 With warmer love—oh ! with far deeper zeal
 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget
 That after many wanderings, many years
 Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
 More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake !

IT IS NO SPIRIT WHO FROM HEAVEN HATH FLOWN

It is no Spirit who from heaven hath flown,
 And is descending on his embassy ;
 Nor Traveller gone from earth the heavens to espy !
 'Tis Hesperus—there he stands with glittering crown,
 First admonition that the sun is down !
 For yet it is broad day-light : clouds pass by ;
 A few are near him still—and now the sky,
 He hath it to himself—'tis all his own.
 O most ambitious Star ! an inquest wrought
 Within me when I recognised thy light ; 10
 A moment I was startled at the sight :
 And, while I gazed, there came to me a thought
 That I might step beyond my natural race
 As thou seem'st now to do ; might one day trace
 Some ground not mine ; and, strong her strength above,
 My Soul, an Apparition in the place,
 Tread there with steps that no one shall reprove !

FRENCH REVOLUTION

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS
COMMENCEMENT.

Oh ! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !
 For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
 Upon our side, we who were strong in love !
 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
 But to be young was very heaven !—Oh ! times,
 In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
 Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
 The attraction of a country in romance !
 When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
 When most intent on making of herself 10
 A prime Enchantress—to assist the work
 Which then was going forward in her name !
 Not favoured spots alone, but the whole earth,
 The beauty wore of promise, that which sets
 (As at some moment might not be unfelt
 Among the bowers of paradise itself)
 The budding rose above the rose full blown.
 What temper at the prospect did not wake
 To happiness unthought of ? The inert
 Were roused, and lively natures rapt away ! 20
 They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
 The playfellows of fancy, who had made
 All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength
 Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred
 Among the grandest objects of the sense,
 And dealt with whatsoever they found there
 As if they had within some lurking right
 To wield it ;—they, too, who, of gentle mood,
 Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
 Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,
 And in the region of their peaceful solves ;— 31
 Now was it that both found, the meek and lofty
 Did both find, helpers to their heart's desire,
 And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish ;
 Were called upon to exercise their skill,
 Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,

Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where !
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us,—the place where in the end
We find our happiness, or not at all !

40

THE CUCKOO

Yes, it was the mountain Echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,
Giving to her sound for sound !

Unsolicited reply
To a babbling wanderer sent ;
Like her ordinary cry,
Like—but oh, how different !

Hears not also mortal Life ?
Hear not we, unthinking Creatures !
Slaves of folly, love, or strife—
Voices of two different natures ?

10

Have not *we* too ?—yes, we have
Answers, and we know not whence ;
Echoes from beyond the grave,
Recognised intelligence !

Such rebounds our inward ear
Catches something from afar—
Listen, ponder, hold them dear ;
For of God,—of God they are.

20

TO A SKYLARK

ETHEREAL minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky !
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?
Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?

Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will.
Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision, and beyond.
Mount, daring warbler !—that love prompted strain,
('Twixt thee and thine a never failing bond),
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plum 10
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood ;
A privacy of glorious light is thine ;
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine ;
Type of the wise who soar, but never roam ;
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home 15

LAODAMIA

" WITH sacrifice before the rising morn
Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired ;
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades forlorn
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I required ;
Celestial pity I again implore :—
Restore him to my sight—great Jove, restore !"

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
With faith, the Suppliant heavenward lifts her hands ;
While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
Her countenance brightens—and her eye expands : 10
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows ;
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ?—O joy !
What doth she look on ?—whom doth she behold ?
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?
His vital presence ? his corporeal mould ?
It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis He !
And a God leads him, winged Mercury !

Mac Hennes spoke — and trembled her with his word
That value all that ; " But your own answers say
prophet.

Laodamia I was at Jove's command
That I should wake the lovers of upper air ;
His voice was heavy with his own words ;
Among the gods, he said, his love was true.

From spring the imprisoned ; and her love was true,
Against that commandment she was true ;
But commandment from above her group
And then as that eager group was made.
The commandment from above her group,
And as command her group she was true.

" I remember in my youth a time
When I was young and true and true
That I was true — and true and true
Break, and the first time I was true
And as I was true and true and true
That I was true and true and true

" Great Jove, Laodamia — do not leave
His gift in your hands — because I see
I am not yet in your hands as before ;
But as before of my hands.

And something else did my words mean ;
The first time I was true and true

" Thus known, the lovers were true
That the first time I was true and true
Because I see ; but as the first time I was true
A general voice a voice did demand ;
And then I was true and true and true
A voice did demand — by Hennes.

" Suppose of Hennes — was true and true
That I was true and true and true
Which then, when true of Hennes was true
By which, as true of Hennes was true
That I was true and true and true
A voice did demand — by Hennes.

" But thou, though capable of sternest deed,
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave ;
And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed
Thou shouldst elude the malice of the grave :
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

60

" No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow this ;
Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side !
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss
To me, this day, a second time thy bride !"
Jove frowned in heaven : the conscious Parcæ threw
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

" This visage tells thee that my doom is past :
Nor should the change be mourned, even if the joys
Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys
Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains :
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains.

70

" Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion : for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul ;
A fervent, not ungovernable, love.
Thy transports moderate ; and meekly mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn—"

" Ah wherefore ?—Did not Hercules by force
Wrest from the guardian Monster of the tomb
Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom ?
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,
And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

80

" The Gods to us are merciful—and they
Yet further may relent : for mightier far
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favourite seat be feeble woman's
breast.

90

“ But if thou goest, I follow—” “ Peace !” he said,—
 She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered ;
 The ghastly colour from his lips had fled ;
 In his deportment, shape, and mien, appeared
 Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
 Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
 In worlds whose course is equable and pure ;
 No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—
 The past unsighed for, and the future sure ; 100
 Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
 Revived, with finer harmony pursued ;

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there
 In happier beauty ; more pellucid streams,
 An ampler ether, a diviner air,
 And fields invested with purpureal gleams ;
 Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
 Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the Soul shall enter which hath earned
 That privilege by virtue.—“ Ill,” said he, 110
 “ The end of man’s existence I discerned,
 Who from ignoble games and revelry
 Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight,
 While tears were thy best pastime, day and night ;

“ And while my youthful peers before my eyes
 (Each hero following his peculiar bent)
 Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
 By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,
 Chieftains and kings in council were detained ;
 What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained. 120

“ The wished-for wind was given :—I then revolved
 The oracle, upon the silent sea ;
 And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
 That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be
 The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,—
 Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

" Yet bitter, oft-times bitter, was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, belovèd Wife !
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,— 130
The paths which we had trod—these fountains, flowers ;
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

" But should suspense permit the Foe to cry,
' Behold they tremble !—haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die ' ?
In soul I swept the indignity away :
Old frailties then recurred :—but lofty thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

" And Thou, though strong in love, art all too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow ; 140
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest re-union in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympathised ;
Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

" Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end ;
For this the passion to excess was driven—
That self might be annulled : her bondage prove
The fetters of a dream opposed to love."— 150

Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes re-appears !
Round the dear Shade she would have clung—'tis vain :
The hours are past—too brief had they been years ;
And him no mortal effort can detain :
Swift, toward the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse She lay.

Thus, all in vain exhorted and reproved,
She perished ; and, as for a wilful crime,
By the just Gods whom no weak pity moved, 160
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,

Apart from happy Ghosts, that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.

—Yet tears to human suffering are due ;
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
Are mourned by man, and not by man alone,
As fondly he believes.—Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew 169
From out the tomb of him for whom she died ;
And ever, when such stature they had gained
That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
The trees' tall summits withered at the sight ;
A constant interchange of growth and blight !¹

DION

(SEE PLUTARCH.)

I.

FAIR is the Swan, whose majesty, prevailing
O'er breezeless water, on Locarno's lake,
Bears him on while proudly sailing
He leaves behind a moon-illumined wake :
Behold ! the mantling spirit of reserve
Fashions his neck into a goodly curve ;
An arch thrown back between luxuriant wings
Of whitest garniture, like fir-tree boughs
To which, on some unruffled morning, clings
A flaky weight of winter's purest snows ! 10
—Behold !—as with a gushing impulse heaves
That downy prow, and softly cleaves

¹ For the account of these long-lived trees, see Pliny's " Natural History," lib. xvi. cap. 44 ; and for the features in the character of Protesilaus, see the " Iphigenia in Aulis " of Euripides. Virgil places the Shade of Laodamia in a mournful region, among unhappy Lovers,

— His Laodamia
It comes.—

The mirror of the crystal flood,
 Vanish inverted hill, and shadowy wood,
 And pendent rocks, where'er, in gliding state,
 Winds the mute Creature without visible Mate
 Or Rival, save the Queen of night
 Showering down a silver light,
 From heaven, upon her chosen Favourite !

II.

Serene, and fitted to embrace, 20
 Where'er he turned, a swan-like grace
 Of haughtiness without pretence,
 And to unfold a still magnificence,
 Was princely Dion, in the power
 And beauty of his happier hour.
 And what pure homage *then* did wait
 On Dion's virtues, while the lunar beam
 Of Plato's genius, from its lofty sphere,
 Fell round him in the grove of Academe,
 Softening their inbred dignity austere— 30
 That he, not too elate
 With self-sufficing solitude,
 But with majestic lowliness endued,
 Might in the universal bosom reign,
 And from affectionate observance gain
 Help, under every change of adverse fate.

III.

Five thousand warriors—O the rapturous day !
 Each crowned with flowers, and armed with spear and
 shield,
 Or ruder weapon which their course might yield,
 To Syracuse advance in bright array. 40
 Who leads them on ?—The anxious people see
 Long-exiled Dion marching at their head,
 He also crowned with flowers of Sicily,
 And in a white, far-beaming corselet clad !

Pure transport undisturbed by doubt or fear
 The gazers feel ; and, rushing to the plain,
 Salute those strangers as a holy train
 Or blest procession (to the Immortals dear)
 That brought their precious liberty again.
 Lo ! when the gates are entered, on each hand, 50
 Down the long street, rich goblets filled with wine
 In seemly order stand,
 On tables set, as if for rites divine ;—
 And, as the great Deliverer marches by,
 He looks on festal ground with fruits bestrown ;
 And flowers are on his person thrown
 In boundless prodigality ;
 Nor doth the general voice abstain from prayer,
 Invoking Dion's tutelary care,
 As if a very Deity he were ! 60

IV.

Mourn, hills and groves of Attica ! and mourn
 Iliuss, bending o'er thy classic urn !
 Mourn, and lament for him whose spirit dreads
 Your once sweet memory, studious walks and shades !
 For him who to divinity aspired,
 Not on the breath of popular applause,
 But through dependence on the sacred laws
 Framed in the schools where Wisdom dwelt retired,
 Intent to trace the ideal path of right
 (More fair than heaven's broad causeway paved with 70
 stars)
 Which Dion learned to measure with sublime delight ;—
 But He hath overleaped the eternal bars ;
 And, following guides whose craft holds no consent
 With aught that breathes the ethereal element,
 Hath stained the robes of civil power with blood,
 Unjustly shed, though for the public good.
 Whence doubts that came too late, and wishes vain,
 Hollow excuses, and triumphant pain ;
 And oft his cogitations sink as low
 As, through the abysses of a joyless heart, 80

The heaviest plummet of despair can go—
 But whence that sudden check? that fearful start!
 He hears an uncouth sound—
 Anon his lifted eyes
 Saw, at a long-drawn gallery's dusky bound,
 A Shape of more than mortal size
 And hideous aspect, stalking round and round!
 A woman's garb the Phantom wore,
 And fiercely swept the marble floor,—
 Like Auster whirling to and fro,
 His force on Caspian foam to try;
 Or Boreas when he scours the snow
 That skins the plains of Thessaly,
 Or when aloft on Mænalus he stops
 His flight, 'mid eddying pine-tree tops!

90

V.

So, but from toil less sign of profit reaping,
 The sullen Spectre to her purpose bowed,
 Sweeping—vehemently sweeping—
 No pause admitted, no design avowed!
 “Avaunt, inexplicable Guest!—avaunt,”
 Exclaimed the Chieftain—“let me rather see
 The coronal that coiling vipers make;
 The torch that flames with many a lurid flake,
 And the long train of doleful pageantry
 Which they behold, whom vengeful Furies haunt;
 Who, while they struggle from the scourge to flee,
 Move where the blasted soil is not unworn,
 And, in their anguish, bear what other minds have
 borne!”

100

VI.

But Shapes, that come not at an earthly call,
 Will not depart when mortal voices bid;
 Lords of the visionary eye whose lid,
 Once raised, remains aghast, and will not fall!
 Ye Gods, thought He, that servile Implement
 Obeys a mystical intent!

110

Your Minister would brush away
 The spots that to my soul adhere ;
 But should she labour night and day,
 They will not, cannot disappear ;
 Whence angry perturbations,—and that look
 Which no philosophy can brook !

120

VII.

Ill-fated Chief ! there are whose hopes are built
 Upon the ruins of thy glorious name ;
 Who, through the portal of one moment's guilt,
 Pursue thee with their deadly aim !
 O matchless perfidy ! portentous lust
 Of monstrous crime !—that horror-striking blade,
 Drawn in defiance of the Gods, hath laid
 The noble Syracusan low in dust !
 Shuddered the walls—the marble city wept—
 And sylvan places heaved a pensive sigh ;
 But in calm peace the appointed Victim slept,
 As he had fallen in magnanimity ;
 Of spirit too capacious to require
 That Destiny her course should change ; too just
 To his own native greatness to desire
 That wretched boon, days lengthened by mistrust.
 So were the hopeless troubles, that involved
 The soul of Dion, instantly dissolved.
 Released from life and cares of princely state,
 He left this moral grafted on his Fate ;
 “ Him only pleasure leads, and peace attends,
 Him, only him, the shield of Jove defends,
 Whose means are fair and spotless as his ends.”

130

140

THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE

I.

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work,
 A deep delight the bosom thrills,
 Oft as I pass along the fork
 Of these fraternal hills :

Where, save the rugged road, we find
 No appanage of human kind,
 Nor hint of man ; if stone or rock
 Seem not his handy-work to mock
 By something cognizably shaped ;
 Mockery—or model roughly hewn,
 And left as if by earthquake strewn,
 Or from the Flood escaped :
 Altars for Druid service fit ;
 (But where no fire was ever lit,
 Unless the glow-worm to the skies
 Thence offer nightly sacrifice)
 Wrinkled Egyptian monument ;
 Green moss-grown tower ; or hoary tent ;
 Tents of a camp that never shall be razed—
 On which four thousand years have gazed !

10

20

II.

Ye ploughshares sparkling on the slopes !
 Ye snow-white lambs that trip
 Imprisoned 'mid the formal props
 Of restless ownership !
 Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall
 To feed the insatiate Prodigal !
 Lawns, houses, chattels, groves, and fields,
 All that the fertile valley shields ;
 Wages of folly—baits of crime,
 Of life's uneasy game the stake,
 Playthings that keep the eyes awake
 Of drowsy, dotard Time ;—
 O care ! O guilt !—O vales and plains,
 Here, 'mid his own unvexed domains,
 A Genius dwells, that can subdue
 At once all memory of You,—
 Most potent when mists veil the sky,
 Mists that distort and magnify,
 While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,
 Sigh forth their ancient melodies !

30

40

III.

List to those shriller notes !—*that* march
Perchance was on the blast,
When, through this Height's inverted arch,
Rome's earliest legion passed !
—They saw, adventurously impelled,
And older eyes than theirs beheld,
This block—and yon, whose church-like frame
Gives to this savage Pass its name.
Aspiring Road ! that lov'st to hide
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn, 50
Not seldom may the hour return
When thou shalt be my guide :
And I (as all men may find cause,
When life is at a weary pause,
And they have panted up the hill
Of duty with reluctant will)
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,
For the rich bounties of constraint ;
Whence oft invigorating transports flow
That choice lacked courage to bestow ! 60

IV.

My Soul was grateful for delight
That wore a threatening brow ;
A veil is lifted—can she slight
The scene that opens now ?
Though habitation none appear,
The greenness tells, man must be there ;
The shelter—that the perspective
Is of the clime in which we live ;
Where Toil pursues his daily round ;
Where Pity sheds sweet tears—and Love, 70
In woodbine bower or birchen grove,
Inflicts his tender wound.
—Who comes not hither ne'er shall know
How beautiful the world below ;

Nor can he guess how lightly leaps
 The brook adown the rocky steeps.
 Farewell, thou desolate Domain !
 Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,
 Carols like a shepherd-boy ;
 And who is she ?—Can that be Joy ! 80
 Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,
 Smoothly skims the meadows wide ;
 While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,
 To hill and vale proclaims aloud,
 “ Whate’er the weak may dread, the wicked dare,
 Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion fair !”

TO —

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF HELVELLYN.

INMATE of a mountain-dwelling,
 Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed
 From the watch-towers of Helvellyn ;
 Awed, delighted, and amazed !

Potent was the spell that bound thee
 Not unwilling to obey ;
 For blue Ether’s arms, flung round thee,
 Stilled the pantings of dismay.

Lo ! the dwindled woods and meadows ;
 What a vast abyss is there ! 10
 Lo ! the clouds, the solemn shadows,
 And the glistenings—heavenly fair !

And a record of commotion
 Which a thousand ridges yield ;
 Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean
 Gleaming like a silver shield !

Maiden ! now take flight ;—inherit
 Alps or Andes—they are thine !
 With the morning’s roseate Spirit
 Sweep their length of snowy line ; 20

Or survey their bright dominions
 In the gorgeous colours drest
 Flung from off the purple pinions,
 Evening spreads throughout the west !

Thine are all the choral¹ fountains
 Warbling in each sparry vault
 Of the untrodden lunar mountains ;
 Listen to their songs !—or halt,

To Niphates' top invited,
 Whither spiteful Satan steered ; 30
 Or descend where the ark alighted,
 When the green earth re-appeared ;

For the power of hills is on thee,
 As was witnessed through thine eye
 Then, when old Helvellyn won thee
 To confess their majesty !

TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO HAD BEEN BEPROACHED FOR TAKING LONG WALKS
 IN THE COUNTRY.

DEAR Child of Nature, let them rail !
 —There is a nest in a green dale,
 A harbour and a hold ;
 Where thou, a Wife and Friend, shalt see
 Thy own heart-stirring days, and be
 A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd boy,
 And treading among flowers of joy
 Which at no season fade,
 Thou, while thy babes around thee cling, 10
 Shalt show us how divine a thing
 A Woman may be made.

* " Choral," edd. 1820, 1827 ; " coral," 1832-1840.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
 Nor leave thee, when grey hairs are nigh,
 A melancholy slave ;
 But an old age serene and bright,
 And lovely as a Lapland night,
 Shall lead thee to thy grave.

18

WATER FOWL

"Let me be allowed the aid of verse to describe the evolutions which these visitants sometimes perform, on a fine day towards the close of winter."—*Extract from the Author's Book on the Lakes* (edition of 1823).

MARK how the feathered tenants of the flood,
 With grace of motion that might scarcely seem
 Inferior to angelical, prolong
 Their curious pastime ! shaping in mid air
 (And sometimes with ambitious wing that soars
 High as the level of the mountain-tops)
 A circuit ampler than the lake beneath—
 Their own domain ; but ever, while intent
 On tracing and retracing that large round,
 Their jubilant activity evolves
 Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,
 Upward and downward, progress intricate
 Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed
 Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done—
 Ten times, or more, I fancied it had ceased ;
 But lo ! the vanished company again
 Ascending ; they approach—I hear their wings,
 Faint, faint at first ; and then an eager sound,
 Past in a moment—and as faint again !
 They tempt the sun to sport amid their plumes ;
 They tempt the water, or the gleaming ice,
 To show them a fair image ; 'tis themselves,
 Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering plain,
 Painted more soft and fair as they descend
 Almost to touch ;—then up again aloft,
 Up with a sally and a flash of speed,
 As if they scorned both resting-place and rest !

10

21

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF BLACK COMB¹

THIS Height a ministering Angel might select :
 For from the summit of BLACK COMB (dread name
 Derived from clouds and storms !) the amplest range
 Of unobstructed prospect may be seen
 That British ground commands :—low dusky tracts,
 Where Trent is nursed, far southward ! Cambrian hills
 To the south-west, a multitudinous show ;
 And, in a line of eye-sight linked with these,
 The hoary peaks of Scotland that give birth 9
 To Tiviot's stream, to Annan, Tweed, and Clyde :—
 Crowding the quarter whence the sun comes forth
 Gigantic mountains rough with crags ; beneath,
 Right at the imperial station's western base,
 Main ocean, breaking audibly, and stretched
 Far into silent regions blue and pale ;—
 And visibly engirding Mona's Isle
 That, as we left the plain, before our sight
 Stood like a lofty mount, uplifting slowly
 (Above the convex of the watery globe)
 Into clear view the cultured fields that streak 20
 Her habitable shores, but now appears
 A dwindled object, and submits to lie
 At the spectator's feet.—Yon azure ridge,
 Is it a perishable cloud ? Or there
 Do we behold the line of Erin's coast ?
 Land sometimes by the roving shepherd-swain
 (Like the bright confines of another world)
 Not doubtfully perceived.—Look homeward now !
 In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene
 The spectacle, how pure !—Of Nature's works, 30
 In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea,
 A revelation infinite it seems ;
 Display august of man's inheritance,
 Of Britain's calm felicity and power !

¹ Black Comb stands at the southern extremity of Cumberland : its base covers a much greater extent of ground than any other mountain in those parts ; and, from its situation, the summit commands a more extensive view than any other point in Britain.

THE TRIAD

SHOW me the noblest Youth of present time,
 Whose trembling fancy would to love give birth ;
 Some God or Hero, from the Olympian clime
 Returned, to seek a Consort upon earth ;
 Or, in no doubtful prospect, let me see
 The brightest star of ages yet to be,
 And I will mate and match him blissfully.

I will not fetch a Naiad from a flood
 Pure as herself—(song lacks not mightier power)
 Nor leaf-crowned Dryad from a pathless wood, 10
 Nor Sea-nymph glistening from her coral bower ;
 Mere Mortals, bodied forth in vision still,
 Shall with Mount Ida's triple lustre fill
 The chaster coverts of a British hill.

“ Appear !—obey my lyre's command !
 Come, like the Graces, hand in hand !
 For ye, though not by birth allied,
 Are Sisters in the bond of love ;
 Nor shall the tongue of envious pride
 Presume those interweavings to reprove 20
 In you, which that fair progeny of Jove
 Learned from the tuneful spheres that glide
 In endless union, earth and sea above.”

—I sing in vain ;—the pines have hushed their waving :
 A peerless Youth expectant at my side,
 Breathless as they, with unabated craving
 Looks to the earth, and to the vacant air ;
 And, with a wandering eye that seems to chide,
 Asks of the clouds what occupants they hide :—
 But why solicit more than sight could bear, 30
 By casting on a moment all we dare ?
 Invoke we those bright Beings one by one ;
 And what was boldly promised, truly shall be done.

“ Fear not a constraining measure !
—Yielding to this gentle spell,
Lucida ! from domes of pleasure,
Or from cottage-sprinkled dell,
Come to regions solitary,
Where the eagle builds her aery,
Above the hermit’s long-forsaken cell !” 40
—She comes !—behold
That Figure, like a ship with snow-white sail !
Nearer she draws ; a breeze uplifts her veil ;
Upon her coming wait
As pure a sunshine and as soft a gale
As e’er, on herbage covering earthly mould,
Tempted the bird of Juno to unfold
His richest splendour—when his veering gait
And every motion of his starry train
Seem governed by a strain 50
Of music, audible to him alone.

“ O Lady, worthy of earth’s proudest throne !
Nor less, by excellence of nature, fit
Beside an unambitious hearth to sit
Domestic queen, where grandeur is unknown ;
What living man could fear
The worst of Fortune’s malice, wert Thou near,
Humbling that lily-stem, thy sceptre meek,
That its fair flowers may from his cheek
Brush the too happy tear ? 60
——Queen, and handmaid lowly !
Whose skill can speed the day with lively cares,
And banish melancholy
By all that mind invents or hand prepares ;
O Thou, against whose lip, without its smile
And in its silence even, no heart is proof ;
Whose goodness, sinking deep, would reconcile
The softest Nursling of a gorgeous palace
To the bare life beneath the hawthorn-roof 69
Of Sherwood’s Archer, or in caves of Wallace—
Who that hath seen thy beauty could content
His soul with but a *glimpse* of heavenly day ?

Who that hath loved thee, but would lay
 His strong hand on the wind, if it were bent
 To take thee in thy majesty away?
 —Pass onward (even the glancing deer
 Till we depart intrude not here ;)
 That mossy slope, o'er which the woodbine throws
 A canopy, is smoothed for thy repose !”

Glad moment is it when the throng 80
 Of warblers in full concert strong
 Strive, and not vainly strive, to rout
 The lagging shower, and force coy Phœbus out,
 Met by the rainbow's form divine,
 Issuing from her cloudy shrine ; —
 So may the thrillings of the lyre
 Prevail to further our desire,
 While to these shades a sister Nymph I call.

“ Come, if the notes thine ear may pierce,
 Come, youngest of the lovely Three, 90
 Submissive to the might of verse
 And the dear voice of harmony,
 By none more deeply felt than Thee !”
 —I sang ; and lo ! from pastimes virginal
 She hastens to the tents
 Of nature, and the lonely elements.
 Air sparkles round her with a dazzling sheen ;
 But mark her glowing cheek, her vesture green !
 And, as if wishful to disarm
 Or to repay the potent Charm, 100
 She bears the stringèd lute of old romance,
 That cheered the trellised arbour's privacy,
 And soothed war-wearied knights in raftèred hall.
 How vivid, yet how delicate, her glee !
 So tripped the Muse, inventress of the dance ;
 So, truant in waste woods, the blithe Euphrosyne !

But the ringlets of that head
 Why are they ungarlanded ?
 Why bedeck her temples less
 Than the simplest shepherdess ? 110

Is it not a brow inviting
 Choicest flowers that ever breathed,
 Which the myrtle would delight in
 With Idalian rose enwreathed ?
 But her humility is well content
 With *one* wild floweret (call it not forlorn)
 FLOWER OF THE WINDS, beneath her bosom worn—
 Yet more for love than ornament.

Open, ye thickets ! let her fly, 119
 Swift as a Thracian Nymph o'er field and height !
 For She, to all but those who love her, shy,
 Would gladly vanish from a Stranger's sight ;
 Though, where she is beloved and loves,
 Light as the wheeling butterfly she moves ;
 Her happy spirit as a bird is free,
 That rifles blossoms on a tree,
 Turning them inside out with arch audacity.
 Alas ! how little can a moment show
 Of an eye where feeling plays
 In ten thousand dewy rays ; 130
 A face o'er which a thousand shadows go !
 —She stops—is fastened to that rivulet's side ;
 And there (while, with sedater mien,
 O'er timid waters that have scarcely left
 Their birthplace in the rocky cleft
 She bends) at leisure may be seen
 Features to old ideal grace allied,
 Amid their smiles and dimples dignified—
 Fit countenance for the soul of primal truth ;
 The bland composure of eternal youth ! 140

What more changeful than the sea ?
 But over his great tides
 Fidelity presides ;
 And this light-hearted Maiden constant is as he.
 High is her aim as heaven above,
 And wide as ether her good-will ;
 And, like the lowly reed, her love
 Can drink its nurture from the scantiest rill :
 Insight as keen as frosty star

Is to *her* charity no bar, 150
 Nor interrupts her frolic graces
 When she is, far from these wild places,
 Encircled by familiar faces.

O the charm that manners draw,
 Nature, from thy genuine law !
 If from what her hand would do,
 Her voice would utter, aught ensue
 Untoward or unfit ;
 She, in benign affections pure,
 In self-forgetfulness secure, 160
 Sheds round the transient harm or vague mischance
 A light unknown to tutored elegance :
 Hers is not a cheek shame-stricken,
 But her blushes are joy-flushes ;
 And the fault (if fault it be)
 Only ministers to quicken
 Laughter-loving gaiety,
 And kindle sportive wit—
 Leaving this Daughter of the mountains free,
 As if she knew that Oberon king of Faery 170
 Had crossed her purpose with some quaint vagary,
 And heard his viewless bands
 Over their mirthful triumph clapping hands.

“ Last of the Three, though eldest born,
 Reveal thyself, like pensive Morn
 Touched by the skylark’s earliest note,
 Ere humbler gladness be afloat.
 But whether in the semblance drest
 Of Dawn—or Eve, fair vision of the west,
 Come with each anxious hope subdued 180
 By woman’s gentle fortitude,
 Each grief, through meekness, settling into rest.
 —Or I would hail thee when some high-wrought
 page
 Of a closed volume lingering in thy hand
 Has raised thy spirit to a peaceful stand
 Among the glories of a happier age.”

Her brow hath opened on me—see it there,
Brightening the umbrage of her hair ;
So gleams the crescent moon, that loves
To be descried through shady groves. 190

Tenderest bloom is on her cheek ;
Wish not for a richer streak ;
Nor dread the depth of meditative eye ;
But let thy love, upon that azure field
Of thoughtfulness and beauty, yield
Its homage offered up in purity.
What wouldst thou more ? In sunny glade,
Or under leaves of thickest shade,
Was such a stillness e'er diffused
Since earth grew calm while angels mused ? 200

Softly she treads, as if her foot were loth
To crush the mountain dew-drops—soon to melt
On the flower's breast ; as if she felt
That flowers themselves, whate'er their hue,
With all their fragrance, all their glistening,
Call to the heart for inward listening—
And though for bridal wreaths and tokens true
Welcomed wisely ; though a growth
Which the careless shepherd sleeps on,
As fitly spring from turf the mourner weeps on—
And without wrong are cropped the marble tomb
to strew. 211

The Charm is over ; the mute Phantoms gone,
Nor will return—but droop not, favoured Youth ;
The apparition that before thee shone
Obeyed a summons covetous of truth.
From these wild rocks thy footsteps I will guide
To bowers in which thy fortune may be tried,
And one of the bright Three become thy happy
Bride.

THE WISHING-GATE

In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate, which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate, from a belief that wishes formed or indulged there have a favourable issue.

HOPE rules a land for ever green :
 All powers that serve the bright-eyed Queen
 Are confident and gay ;
 Clouds at her bidding disappear ;
 Points she to aught ?—the bliss draws near,
 And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of Wishes—there
 Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,
 And thoughts with things at strife ;
 Yet how forlorn, should *ye* depart, 10
 Ye superstitions of the *heart*,
 How poor, were human life !

When magic lore abjured its might,
 Ye did not forfeit one dear right,
 One tender claim abate ;
 Witness this symbol of your sway,
 Surviving near the public way,
 The rustic Wishing-gate !

Enquire not if the faery race
 Shed kindly influence on the place, 20
 Ere northward they retired ;
 If here a warrior left a spell,
 Panting for glory as he fell ;
 Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,
 Composed with Nature's finest care,
 And in her fondest love—
 Peace to embosom and content—
 To overawe the turbulent,
 The selfish to reprove. 30

Yea! even the Stranger from afar,
Reclining on this moss-grown bar,
 Unknowing, and unknown,
The infection of the ground partakes.
Longing for his Beloved—who makes
 All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious Spirits fear
The mystic stirrings that are here,
 The ancient faith disclaim?
The local Genius ne'er befriends
Desires whose course in folly ends,
 Whose just reward is shame.

40

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,
If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,
 Here crave an easier lot;
If some have thirsted to renew
A broken vow, or bind a true,
 With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast
Upon the irrevocable past,
 Some Penitent sincere
May for a worthier future sigh,
While trickles from his downcast eye
 No unavailing tear.

50

The Worldling, pining to be freed
From turmoil, who would turn or speed
 The current of his fate,
Might stop before this favoured scene,
At Nature's call, nor blush to lean
 Upon the Wishing-gate.

60

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak
Is man, though loth such help to *seek*,
 Yet, passing, here might pause,
And thirst for insight to allay
Misgiving, while the crimson day
 In quietness withdraws;

Or when the church-clock's knell profound
 To Time's first step across the bound
 Of midnight makes reply ;
 Time pressing on with starry crest
 To filial sleep upon the breast
 Of dread eternity.

70

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK

A Rock there is whose homely front
 The passing traveller slights ;
 Yet there the glow-worms hang their lamps,
 Like stars, at various heights ;
 And one coy Primrose to that Rock
 The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,
 What kingdoms overthrown,
 Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft
 And marked it for my own ;
 A lasting link in Nature's chain
 From highest heaven let down !

10

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
 Their fellowship renew ;
 The stems are faithful to the root,
 That worketh out of view ;
 And to the rock the root adheres
 In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,
 Though threatening still to fall ;
 The earth is constant to her sphere ;
 And God upholds them all :
 So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads
 Her annual funeral.

20

Here closed the meditative strain ;
But air breathed soft that day,
The hoary mountain-heights were cheered,
The sunny vale looked gay ;
And to the Primrose of the Rock
I gave this after-lay.

30

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,
Like Thee, in field and grove
Revive unenvied ;—mightier far,
Than tremblings that reprove
Our vernal tendencies to hope,
Is God's redeeming love ;

That love which changed—for wan disease,
For sorrow that had bent
O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—
Their moral element,
And turned the thistles of a curse
To types beneficent.

40

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,
The reasoning Sons of Men,
From one oblivious winter called
Shall rise, and breathe again ;
And in eternal summer lose
Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends
This prescience from on high,
The faith that elevates the just,
Before and when they die ;
And makes each soul a separate heaven,
A court for Deity.

50

PRESENTIMENTS

PRESENTIMENTS ! they judge not right
Who deem that ye from open light
Retire in fear of shame ;
All *heaven-born* Instincts shun the touch
Of vulgar sense,—and, being such,
Such privilege ye claim.

The tear whose source I could not guess,
The deep sigh that seemed fatherless,
Were mine in early days ;
And now, unforced by time to part
With fancy, I obey my heart,
And venture on your praise.

10

What though some busy foes to good,
Too potent over nerve and blood,
Lurk near you—and combine
To taint the health which ye infuse ;
This hides not from the moral Muse
Your origin divine.

How oft from you, derided Powers !
Comes Faith that in auspicious hours
Builds castles, not of air :
Bodings unsanctioned by the will
Flow from your visionary skill,
And teach us to beware.

20

The bosom-weight, your stubborn gift,
That no philosophy can lift,
Shall vanish, if ye please,
Like morning mist : and, where it lay,
The spirits at your bidding play
In gaiety and ease.

30

Star-guided contemplations move
Through space, though calm, not raised above
Prognostics that ye rule ;
The naked Indian of the wild,
And haply too the cradled Child,
Are pupils of your school.

But who can fathom your intents,
Number their signs or instruments ?
A rainbow, a sunbeam,
A subtle smell that Spring unbinds,
Dead pause abrupt of midnight winds,
An echo, or a dream.

40

The laughter of the Christmas hearth
With sighs of self-exhausted mirth
Ye feelingly reprove ;
And daily, in the conscious breast,
Your visitations are a test
And exercise of love.

When some great change gives boundless scope
To an exulting Nation's hope
Oft, startled and made wise
By your low-breathed interpretations,
The simply-meek foretaste the springs
Of bitter contraries.

50

Ye daunt the proud array of war,
Pervade the lonely ocean far
As sail hath been unfurled ;
For dancers in the festive hall
What ghastly partners hath your call
Fetched from the shadowy world.

60

'Tis said that warnings ye dispense,
Emboldened by a keener sense ;
That men have lived for whom,
With dread precision, ye made clear
The hour that in a distant year
Should knell them to the tomb.

Unwelcome insight ! Yet there are
 Blest times when mystery is laid bare,
 Truth shows a glorious face,
 While on that isthmus which commands 70
 The councils of both worlds she stands,
 Sage Spirits ! by your grace.

God, who instructs the brutes to scent
 All changes of the element,
 Whose wisdom fixed the scale
 Of natures, for our wants provides
 By higher, sometimes humbler, guides,
 When lights of reason fail. 78

VERNAL ODE

" *Rerum Natura tota est nusquam magis quam in minimis.*"—
 PLIN. *Nat. Hist.*

I.

BENEATH the concave of an April sky,
 When all the fields with freshest green were dight,
 Appeared, in presence of the spiritual eye
 That aids or supersedes our grosser sight,
 The form and rich habiliments of One
 Whose countenance bore resemblance to the sun,
 When it reveals, in evening majesty,
 Features half lost amid their own pure light.
 Poised like a weary cloud, in middle air
 He hung,—then floated with angelic ease 10
 (Softening that bright effulgence by degrees)
 Till he had reached a summit sharp and bare,
 Where oft the venturous heifer drinks the noontide
 breeze.

Upon the apex of that lofty cone
 Alighted, there the Stranger stood alone ;
 Fair as a gorgeous Fabric of the east
 Suddenly raised by some enchanter's power,
 Where nothing was ; and firm as some old Tower
 Of Britain's realm, whose leafy crest
 Waves high, embellished by a gleaming shower ! 20

II.

Beneath the shadow of his purple wings
 Rested a golden harp ;—he touched the strings ;
 And, after prelude of unearthly sound
 Poured through the echoing hills around,
 He sang—

“ No wintry desolations,
 Scorching blight or noxious dew,
 Affect my native habitations ;
 Buried in glory, far beyond the scope
 Of man’s enquiring gaze, but to his hope
 Imaged, though faintly, in the hue 30
 Profound of night’s ethereal blue ;
 And in the aspect of each radiant orb ;—
 Some fixed, some wandering with no timid curb ;
 But wandering star and fixed, to mortal eye,
 Blended in absolute serenity,
 And free from semblance of decline ;—
 Fresh as if Evening brought their natal hour,
 Her darkness splendour gave, her silence power,
 To testify of Love and Grace divine.

III.

“ What if those bright fires 40
 Shine subject to decay,
 Sons haply of extinguished sires,
 Themselves to lose their light, or pass away
 Like clouds before the wind,
 Be thanks poured out to Him whose hand bestows,
 Nightly, on human kind
 That vision of endurance and repose.
 —And though to every draught of vital breath,
 Renewed throughout the bounds of earth or ocean,
 The melancholy gates of Death 50
 Respond with sympathetic motion ;
 Though all that feeds on nether air
 Howe’er magnificent or fair,
 Grows but to perish, and entrust
 Its ruins to their kindred dust ;

Yet, by the Almighty's ever-during care,
 Her procreant vigils Nature keeps
 Amid the unfathomable deeps ;
 And saves the peopled fields of earth
 From dread of emptiness or dearth. 60
 Thus, in their stations, lifting tow'rd the sky
 The foliated head in cloud-like majesty,
 The shadow-casting race of trees survive :
 Thus, in the train of Spring, arrive
 Sweet flowers ;—what living eye hath viewed
 Their myriads ?—endlessly renewed,
 Wherever strikes the sun's glad ray ;
 Where'er the subtle waters stray ;
 Wherever sportive breezes bend
 Their course, or genial showers descend ! 70
 Mortals, rejoice ! the very Angels quit
 Their mansions unsusceptible of change,
 Amid your pleasant bowers to sit,
 And through your sweet vicissitudes to range !”

IV.

O, nursed at happy distance from the cares
 Of a too-anxious world, mild pastoral Muse !
 That to the sparkling crown Urania wears
 And to her sister Clio's laurel wreath, 78
 Preferr'd a garland culled from purple heath,
 Or blooming thicket moist with morning dews ;
 Was such bright Spectacle vouchsafed to me ?
 And was it granted to the simple ear
 Of thy contented Votary
 Such melody to hear !
 Him rather suits it, side by side with thee,
 Wrapped in a fit of pleasing indolence,
 While thy tired lute hangs on the hawthorn-tree,
 To lie and listen—till o'er-drowsèd sense
 Sinks, hardly conscious of the influence—
 To the soft murmur of the vagrant Bee. 90
 —A slender sound ! yet hoary Time
 Doth to the *Soul* exalt it with the chime

Of all his years ;—a company
 Of ages coming, ages gone ;
 (Nations from before them sweeping,
 Regions in destruction steeping,)

But every awful note in unison
 With that faint utterance, which tells
 Of treasure sucked from buds and bells,
 For the pure keeping of those waxen cells ; 100
 Where She—a statist prudent to confer
 Upon the common weal ; a warrior bold,
 Radiant all over with unburnished gold,
 And armed with living spear for mortal fight ;
 A cunning forager
 That spreads no waste ; a social builder ; one
 In whom all busy offices unite
 With all fine functions that afford delight—
 Safe through the winter storm in quiet dwells !

V.

And is She brought within the power 110
 Of vision ?—o'er this tempting flower
 Hovering until the petals stay
 Her flight, and take its voice away !—
 Observe each wing !—a tiny van !
 The structure of her laden thigh,
 How fragile ! yet of ancestry
 Mysteriously remote and high ;
 High as the imperial front of man ;
 The roseate bloom on woman's cheek ;
 The soaring eagle's curvèd beak ; 120
 The white plumes of the floating swan ;
 Old as the tiger's paw, the lion's mane
 Ere shaken by that mood of stern disdain
 At which the desert trembles.—Humming Bee !
 Thy sting was needless then, perchance unknown,
 The seeds of malice were not sown ;
 All creatures met in peace, from fierceness free,
 And no pride blended with their dignity.

—Tears had not broken from their source ;
 Nor Anguish strayed from her Tartarean den ; 130
 The golden years maintained a course
 Not undiversified though smooth and even ;
 We were not mocked with glimpse and shadow
 then,
 Bright Seraphs mixed familiarly with men ;
 And earth and stars composed a universal heaven !

DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS

“ Not to the earth confined,
 Ascend to heaven.”

WHERE will they stop, those breathing Powers,
 The Spirits of the new-born flowers ?
 They wander with the breeze, they wind
 Where'er the streams a passage find ;
 Up from their native ground they rise
 In mute aerial harmonies ;
 From humble violet, modest thyme,
 Exhaled, the essential odours climb,
 As if no space below the sky
 Their subtle flight could satisfy : 10
 Heaven will not tax our thoughts with pride
 If like ambition be *their* guide.

Roused by this kindest of May-showers,
 The spirit-quickener of the flowers,
 That with moist virtue softly cleaves
 The buds, and freshens the young leaves,
 The birds pour forth their souls in notes
 Of rapture from a thousand throats—
 Here checked by too impetuous haste,
 While there the music runs to waste, 20
 With bounty more and more enlarged,
 Till the whole air is overcharged ;
 Give ear, O Man ! to their appeal,
 And thirst for no inferior zeal,
 Thou, who canst *think*, as well as feel.

Mount from the earth ; aspire ! aspire !
So pleads the town's cathedral quire,
In strains that from their solemn height
Sink, to attain a loftier flight ;
While incense from the altar breathes 30
Rich fragrance in embodied wreaths ;
Or, flung from swinging censer, shrouds
The taper-lights, and curls in clouds
Around angelic Forms, the still
Creation of the painter's skill,
That on the service wait concealed
One moment, and the next revealed.
—Cast off your bonds, awake, arise,
And for no transient ecstasies !
What else can mean the visual plea 40
Of still or moving imagery—
The iterated summons loud,
Not wasted on the attendant crowd,
Nor wholly lost upon the throng
Hurrying the busy streets along ?

Alas ! the sanctities combined
By art to unsensualise the mind
Decay and languish ; or, as creeds
And humours change, are spurned like weeds :
The priests are from their altars thrust ; 50
Temples are levelled with the dust ;
And solemn rites and awful forms
Founder amid fanatic storms.
Yet evermore, through years renewed
In undisturbed vicissitude
Of seasons balancing their flight
On the swift wings of day and night,
Kind Nature keeps a heavenly door
Wide open for the scattered Poor.
Where flower-breathed incense to the skies
Is wafted in mute harmonies ; 61
And ground fresh-cloven by the plough
Is fragrant with a humbler vow ;

Where birds and brooks from leafy dells
 Chime forth unwearied canticles,
 And vapours magnify and spread
 The glory of the sun's bright head—
 Still constant in her worship, still
 Conforming to the eternal Will,
 Whether men sow or reap the fields,
 Divine monition Nature yields,
 That not by bread alone we live,
 Or what a hand of flesh can give ;
 That every day should leave some part
 Free for a sabbath of the heart :
 So shall the seventh be truly blest,
 From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.

70

TO THE CLOUDS

ARMY of Clouds ! ye wingèd Host in troops
 Ascending from behind the motionless brow
 Of that tall rock, as from a hidden world,
 Oh whither with such eagerness of speed ?
 What seek ye, or what shun ye ? of the gale
 Companions, fear ye to be left behind,
 Or racing o'er your blue ethereal field
 Contend ye with each other ? of the sea
 Children, thus post ye over vale and height
 To sink upon your mother's lap—and rest ? 10
 Or were ye rightlier hailed, when first mine eyes
 Beheld in your impetuous march the likeness
 Of a wide army pressing on to meet
 Or overtake some unknown enemy ?—
 But your smooth motions suit a peaceful aim ;
 And Fancy, not less aptly pleased, compares
 Your squadrons to an endless flight of birds
 Aerial, upon due migration bound
 To milder climes ; or rather do ye urge
 In caravan your hasty pilgrimage 20
 To pause at last on more aspiring heights
 Than these, and utter your devotion there

With thunderous voice ? Or are ye jubilant,
 And would ye, tracking your proud lord the Sun,
 Be present at his setting ; or the pomp
 Of Persian mornings would ye fill, and stand
 Poising your splendours high above the heads
 Of worshippers kneeling to their up-risen God ?
 Whence, whence, ye Clouds ! this eagerness of speed ?
 Speak, silent creatures.—They are gone, are fled,
 Buried together in yon gloomy mass 31
 That loads the middle heaven ; and clear and bright
 And vacant doth the region which they thronged
 Appear ; a calm descent of sky conducting
 Down to the unapproachable abyss,
 Down to that hidden gulf from which they rose
 To vanish—fleet as days and months and years,
 Fleet as the generations of mankind,
 Power, glory, empire, as the world itself,
 The lingering world, when time hath ceased to be.
 But the winds roar, shaking the rooted trees, 41
 And see ! a bright precursor to a train
 Perchance as numerous, overpeers the rock
 That sullenly refuses to partake
 Of the wild impulse. From a fount of life
 Invisible, the long procession moves
 Luminous or gloomy, welcome to the vale
 Which they are entering, welcome to mine eye
 That sees them, to my soul that owns in them,
 And in the bosom of the firmament 50
 O'er which they move, wherein they are contained,
 A type of her capacious self and all
 Her restless progeny.

A humble walk

Here is my body doomed to tread, this path,
 A little hoary line and faintly traced,
 Work, shall we call it, of the shepherd's foot
 Or of his flock ?—joint vestige of them both.
 I pace it unrepining, for my thoughts
 Admit no bondage and my words have wings.
 Where is the Orphean lyre, or Druid harp. 60
 To accompany the verse ? The mountain blast

Shall be our *hand* of music ; he shall sweep
The rocks, and quivering trees, and billowy lake,
And search the fibres of the caves, and they
Shall answer, for our song is of the Clouds,
And the wind loves them ; and the gentle gales—
Which by their aid re-clothe the naked lawn
With annual verdure, and revive the woods,
And moisten the parched lips of thirsty flowers—
Love them ; and every idle breeze of air 70
Bends to the favourite burthen. Moon and stars
Keep their most solemn vigils when the Clouds
Watch also, shifting peaceably their place
Like bands of ministering Spirits, or when they lie,
As if some Protean art the change had wrought,
In listless quiet o'er the ethereal deep
Scattered, a Cyclades of various shapes
And all degrees of beauty. O ye Lightnings !
Ye are their perilous offspring ; and the Sun—
Source inexhaustible of life and joy, 80
And type of man's far-darting reason, therefore
In old time worshipped as the god of verse,
A blazing intellectual deity—
Loves his own glory in their looks, and showers
Upon that unsubstantial brotherhood
Visions with all but beatific light
Enriched—too transient, were they not renewed
From age to age, and did not, while we gaze
In silent rapture, credulous desire 89
Nourish the hope that memory lacks not power
To keep the treasure unimpaired. Vain thought !
Yet why repine, created as we are
For joy and rest, albeit to find them only
Lodged in the bosom of eternal things ?

PETER BELL

A TALE.

“What’s in a *Name* !”

“Brutus will start a Spirit as soon as Cæsar !”

PROLOGUE

THERE’S something in a flying horse,
There’s something in a huge balloon ;
But through the clouds I’ll never float
Until I have a little Boat,
Shaped like the crescent-moon.

And now I *have* a little Boat,
In shape a very crescent-moon :
Fast through the clouds my Boat can sail ;
But if perchance your faith should fail,
Look up—and you shall see me soon !

10

The woods, my Friends, are round you roaring,
Rocking and roaring like a sea ;
The noise of danger’s in your ears,
And ye have all a thousand fears
Both for my little Boat and me !

Meanwhile untroubled I admire
The pointed horns of my canoe ;
And, did not pity touch my breast
To see how ye are all distress,
Till my ribs ached I’d laugh at you !

20

Away we go, my Boat and I—
Frail man ne’er sate in such another ;
Whether among the winds we strive,
Or deep into the clouds we dive,
Each is contented with the other.

Away we go—and what care we
For treasons, tumults, and for wars ?
We are as calm in our delight
As is the crescent-moon so bright
Among the scattered stars.

30

Up goes my Boat among the stars
Through many a breathless field of light,
Through many a long blue field of ether,
Leaving ten thousand stars beneath her :
Up goes my little Boat so bright !

The Crab, the Scorpion, and the Bull—
We pry among them all ; have shot
High o'er the red-haired race of Mars,
Covered from top to toe with scars ;
Such company I like it not !

40

The towns in Saturn are decayed,
And melancholy Spectres throng them ;—
The Pleiads, that appear to kiss
Each other in the vast abyss,
With joy I sail among them.

Swift Mercury resounds with mirth,
Great Jove is full of stately bowers ;
But these, and all that they contain,
What are they to that tiny grain,
That little Earth of ours ?

50

Then back to Earth, the dear green Earth :—
Whole ages if I here should roam,
The world for my remarks and me
Would not a whit the better be ;
I've left my heart at home.

See ! there she is, the matchless Earth !
There spreads the famed Pacific Ocean !
Old Andes thrusts yon craggy spear
Through the grey clouds ; the Alps are here,
Like waters in commotion !

60

Yon tawny slip is Libya's sands ;
That silver thread the river Dnieper ;
And look, where clothed in brightest green
Is a sweet Isle, of isles the Queen ;
Ye fairies, from all evil keep her !

And see the town where I was born !
Around those happy fields we span
In boyish gambols ;—I was lost
Where I have been, but on this coast
I feel I am a man.

70

Never did fifty things at once
Appear so lovely, never, never ;—
How tunefully the forests ring !
To hear the earth's soft murmuring
Thus could I hang for ever !

"Shame on you !" cried my little Boat,
"Was ever such a homesick Loon,
Within a living Boat to sit,
And make no better use of it ;
A Boat twin-sister of the crescent-moon !

80

"Ne'er in the breast of full-grown Poet
Fluttered so faint a heart before ;—
Was it the music of the spheres
That overpowered your mortal ears ?
—Such din shall trouble them no more.

"These nether precincts do not lack
Charms of their own ;—then come with me,
I want a comrade, and for you
There's nothing that I would not do ;
Nought is there that you shall not see.

90

"Haste ! and above Siberian snows
We'll sport amid the boreal morning ;
Will mingle with her lustres gliding
Among the stars, the stars now hiding,
And now the stars adorning.

"I know the secrets of a land
Where human foot did never stray ;
Fair is that land as evening skies,
And cool, though in the depth it lies
Of burning Africa.

100

"Or we'll into the realm of Faery,
Among the lovely shades of things ;
The shadowy forms of mountains bare,
And streams, and bowers, and ladies fair,
The shades of palaces and kings !

"Or, if you thirst with hardy zeal
Less quiet regions to explore,
Prompt voyage shall to you reveal
How earth and heaven are taught to feel
The might of magic lore !"

110

"My little vagrant Form of light,
My gay and beautiful Canoe,
Well have you played your friendly part ;
As kindly take what from my heart
Experience forces—then adieu !

"Temptation lurks among your words ;
But, while these pleasures you're pursuing
Without impediment or let,
No wonder if you quite forget
What on the earth is doing.

120

"There was a time when all mankind
Did listen with a faith sincere
To tuneful tongues in mystery versed ;
Then Poets fearlessly rehearsed
The wonders of a wild career.

"Go—(but the world's a sleepy world,
And 'tis, I fear, an age too late)
Take with you some ambitious Youth !
For, restless Wanderer ! I, in truth,
Am all unfit to be your mate.

130

"Long have I loved what I behold,
The night that calms, the day that cheers ;
The common growth of mother-earth,
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,
Her humblest mirth and tears.

"The dragon's wing, the magic ring,
I shall not covet for my dower,
If I along that lowly way
With sympathetic heart may stray,
And with a soul of power.

14C

"These given, what more need I desire
To stir, to soothe, or elevate ?
What nobler marvels than the mind
May in life's daily prospect find,
May find or there create ?

"A potent wand doth Sorrow wield ;
What spell so strong as guilty Fear !
Repentance is a tender Sprite ;
If aught on earth have heavenly might,
'Tis lodged within her silent tear.

150

"But grant my wishes,—let us now
Descend from this ethereal height ;
Then take thy way, adventurous Skiff,
More daring far than Hippogriff,
And be thy own delight !

"To the stone-table in my garden,
Loved haunt of many a summer hour,
The Squire is come : his daughter Bess
Beside him in the cool recess
Sits blooming like a flower.

160

"With these are many more convened ;
They know not I have been so far ;—
I see them there, in number nine,
Beneath the spreading Weymouth-pine
I see them—there they are !

“There sits the Vicar and his Dame ;
And there my good friend, Stephen Otter ;
And, ere the light of evening fail,
To them I must relate the Tale
Of Peter Bell the Potter.”

170

Off flew the Boat—away she flees,
Spurning her freight with indignation !
And I, as well as I was able,
On two poor legs, toward my stone-table
Limped on with sore vexation.

“O, here he is !” cried little Bess—
She saw me at the garden-door ;
“We’ve waited anxiously and long.”
They cried, and all around me throng,
Full nine of them or more !

180

“Reproach me not—your fears be still—
Be thankful we again have met ;—
Resume, my Friends ! within the shade
Your seats, and quickly shall be paid
The well-remembered debt.”

I spake with faltering voice, like one
Not wholly rescued from the pale
Of a wild dream, or worse illusion ;
But straight, to cover my confusion,
Began the promised Tale.

190

PART FIRST

ALL by the moonlight river-side
Groaned the poor Beast—alas ! in vain ;
The staff was raised to loftier height,
And the blows fell with heavier weight
As Peter struck—and struck again.

“ Hold !” cried the Squire, “ against the rules
Of common sense you’re surely sinning ;
This leap is for us all too bold ;
Who Peter was, let that be told,
And start from the beginning.” 200

———“ A Potter,¹ Sir, he was by trade ;”
Said I, becoming quite collected ;
“ And wheresoever he appeared,
Full twenty times was Peter feared
For once that Peter was respected.

“ He, two-and-thirty years or more,
Had been a wild and woodland rover ;
Had heard the Atlantic surges roar
On farthest Cornwall’s rocky shore,
And trod the cliffs of Dover. 210

“ And he had seen Caernarvon’s towers,
And well he knew the spire of Sarum ;
And he had been where Lincoln bell
Flings o’er the fen that ponderous knell—
A far-renowned alarum !

“ At Doncaster, at York, and Leeds,
And merry Carlisle had he been ;
And all along the Lowlands fair,
All through the bonny shire of Ayr ;
And far as Aberdeen. 220

“ And he had been at Inverness ;
And Peter, by the mountain-rills,
Had danced his round with Highland lasses ;
And he had lain beside his asses
On lofty Cheviot Hills :

“ And he had trudged through Yorkshire dales,
Among the rocks and winding *scars* ;
Where deep and low the hamlets lie
Beneath their little patch of sky
And little lot of stars : 230

¹ In the dialect of the North, a hawker of earthenware is thus designated.

“ And all along the indented coast,
Bespattered with the salt-sea foam ;
Where'er a knot of houses lay
On headland, or in hollow bay ;—
Sure never man like him did roam !

“ As well might Peter in the Fleet
Have been fast bound, a begging debtor ;—
He travelled here, he travelled there ;—
But not the value of a hair
Was heart or head the better.

240

“ He roved among the vales and streams,
In the green wood and hollow dell ;
They were his dwellings night and day,—
But nature ne'er could find the way
Into the heart of Peter Bell.

“ In vain, through every changeful year,
Did Nature lead him as before ;
A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

250

“ Small change it made in Peter's heart
To see his gentle panniered train
With more than vernal pleasure feeding,
Where'er the tender grass was leading
Its earliest green along the lane.

“ In vain, through water, earth, and air,
The soul of happy sound was spread,
When Peter on some April morn,
Beneath the broom or budding thorn,
Made the warm earth his lazy bed.

260

“ At noon, when, by the forest's edge
He lay beneath the branches high,
The soft blue sky did never melt
Into his heart ; he never felt
The witchery of the soft blue sky !

“ On a fair prospect some have looked
And felt, as I have heard them say,
As if the moving time had been
A thing as steadfast as the scene
On which they gazed themselves away. 270

“ Within the breast of Peter Bell
These silent raptures found no place ;
He was a Carl as wild and rude
As ever hue-and-cry pursued,
As ever ran a felon's race.

“ Of all that lead a lawless life,
Of all that love their lawless lives,
In city or in village small, .
He was the wildest far of all ;—
He had a dozen wedded wives. 280

“ Nay, start not !—wedded wives—and twelve !
But how one wife could e'er come near him,
In simple truth I cannot tell ;
For, be it said of Peter Bell,
To see him was to fear him.

“ Though Nature could not touch his heart
By lovely forms, and silent weather,
And tender sounds, yet you might see
At once that Peter Bell and she
Had often been together. 290

“ A savage wildness round him hung
As of a dweller out of doors ;
In his whole figure and his mien
A savage character was seen
Of mountains and of dreary moors.

“ To all the unshaped half-human thoughts
Which solitary Nature feeds
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice,
Had Peter joined whatever vice
The cruel city breeds. 300

" His face was keen as is the wind
That cuts along the hawthorn-fence ;
Of courage you saw little there,
But, in its stead, a medley air
Of cunning and of impudence.

" He had a dark and sidelong walk,
And long and slouching was his gait ;
Beneath his looks so bare and bold,
You might perceive, his spirit cold
Was playing with some inward bait. 310

" His forehead wrinkled was and furred ;
A work, one half of which was done
By thinking of his '*whens*' and '*hows* ;'
And half, by knitting of his brows
Beneath the glaring sun.

" There was a hardness in his cheek,
There was a hardness in his eye,
As if the man had fixed his face,
In many a solitary place,
Against the wind and open sky !" 320

ONE night, (and now, my little Bess !
We've reached at last the promised Tale ;)
One beautiful November night,
When the full moon was shining bright
Upon the rapid river Swale,

Along the river's winding banks
Peter was travelling all alone ;—
Whether to buy or sell, or led
By pleasure running in his head,
To me was never known. 330

He trudged along through copse and brake
He trudged along o'er hill and dale ;
Nor for the moon cared he a tittle,
And for the stars he cared as little,
And for the murmuring river Swale.

But, chancing to espy a path
That promised to cut short the way ;
As many a wiser man hath done,
He left a trusty guide for one
That might his steps betray.

340

To a thick wood he soon is brought
Where cheerily his course he weaves,
And whistling loud may yet be heard,
Though often buried like a bird
Darkling, among the boughs and leaves.

But quickly Peter's mood is changed,
And on he drives with cheeks that burn
In downright fury and in wrath ;—
There's little sign the treacherous path
Will to the road return !

350

The path grows dim, and dimmer still ;
Now up, now down, the Rover wends,
With all the sail that he can carry,
Till brought to a deserted quarry—
And there the pathway ends.

He paused—for shadows of strange shape,
Massy and black, before him lay ;
But through the dark, and through the cold,
And through the yawning fissures old,
Did Peter boldly press his way

360

Right through the quarry ;—and behold
A scene of soft and lovely hue !
Where blue and grey, and tender green,
Together make as sweet a scene
As ever human eye did view.

Beneath the clear blue sky he saw
A little field of meadow ground ;
But field or meadow name it not ;
Call it of earth a small green plot,
With rocks encompassed round.

370

The Swale flowed under the grey rocks,
But he flowed quiet and unseen :—
You need a strong and stormy gale
To bring the noises of the Swale
To that green spot, so calm and green !

And is there no one dwelling here,
No hermit with his beads and glass ?
And does no little cottage look
Upon this soft and fertile nook ?
Does no one live near this green grass ? 380

Across the deep and quiet spot
Is Peter driving through the grass—
And now has reached the skirting trees ;
When, turning round his head, he sees
A solitary Ass.

“ A prize ! ” cries Peter—but he first
Must spy about him far and near :
There’s not a single house in sight,
No woodman’s hut, no cottage light—
Peter, you need not fear ! 390

There’s nothing to be seen but woods,
And rocks that spread a hoary gleam,
And this one Beast, that from the bed
Of the green meadow hangs his head
Over the silent stream.

His head is with a halter bound ;
The halter seizing, Peter leapt
Upon the Creature’s back, and plied
With ready heels his shaggy side ;
But still the Ass his station kept. 400

Then Peter gave a sudden jerk,
A jerk that from a dungeon-floor
Would have pulled up an iron ring ;
But still the heavy-headed Thing
Stood just as he had stood before !

Quoth Peter, leaping from his seat,
"There is some plot against me laid ;"
Once more the little meadow-ground
And all the hoary cliffs around
He cautiously surveyed.

410

All, all is silent—rocks and woods,
All still and silent—far and near !
Only the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turns round his long left ear.

Thought Peter, What can mean all this ?
Some ugly witchcraft must be here !
—Once more the Ass, with motion dull,
Upon the pivot of his skull
Turned round his long left ear.

420

Suspicion ripened into dread ;
Yet, with deliberate action slow,
His staff high-raising, in the pride
Of skill, upon the sounding hide
He dealt a sturdy blow.

The poor Ass staggered with the shock ;
And then, as if to take his ease,
In quiet uncomplaining mood,
Upon the spot where he had stood,
Dropped gently down upon his knees ;

430

As gently on his side he fell ;
And by the river's brink did lie ;
And, while he lay like one that mourned,
The patient Beast on Peter turned
His shining hazel eye.

'Twas but one mild, reproachful look,
A look more tender than severe ;
And straight in sorrow, not in dread,
He turned the eye-ball in his head
Towards the smooth river deep and clear.

440

Upon the Beast the sapling rings ;
His lank sides heaved, his limbs they stirred ;
He gave a groan, and then another,
Of that which went before the brother,
And then he gave a third.

All by the moonlight river-side
He gave three miserable groans ;
And not till now hath Peter seen
How gaunt the Creature is,—how lean
And sharp his staring bones !

450

With legs stretched out and stiff he lay :—
No word of kind commiseration
Fell at the sight from Peter's tongue ;
With hard contempt his heart was wrung,
With hatred and vexation.

The meagre beast lay still as death ;
And Peter's lips with fury quiver ;
Quoth he, " You little mulish dog,
I'll fling your carcass like a log
Head-foremost down the river !"

460

An impious oath confirmed the threat—
Whereat from the earth on which he lay
To all the echoes, south and north,
And east and west, the Ass sent forth
A long and clamorous bray !

This outcry, on the heart of Peter,
Seems like a note of joy to strike,—
Joy at the heart of Peter knocks ;
But in the echo of the rocks
Was something Peter did not like.

470

Whether to cheer his coward breast,
Or that he could not break the chain,
In this serene and solemn hour,
Twined round him by demoniac power,
To the blind work he turned again.

Among the rocks and winding crags ;
Among the mountains far away ;
Once more the Ass did lengthen out
More ruefully a deep-drawn shout,
The hard dry see-saw of his horrible bray ! 480

What is there now in Peter's heart !
Or whence the might of this strange sound ?
The moon uneasy looked and dimmer,
The broad blue heavens appeared to glimmer,
And the rocks staggered all around—

From Peter's hand the sapling dropped !
Threat has he none to execute ;
“ If any one should come and see
That I am here, they'll think,” quoth he,
“ I'm helping this poor dying brute.” 490

He scans the Ass from limb to limb,
And ventures now to uplift his eyes ;
More steady looks the moon, and clear,
More like themselves the rocks appear
And touch more quiet skies.

His scorn returns—his hate revives ;
He stoops the Ass's neck to seize
With malice—that again takes flight ;
For in the pool a startling sight
Meets him, among the inverted trees. 500

Is it the moon's distorted face ?
The ghost-like image of a cloud ?
Is it a gallows there portrayed ?
Is Peter of himself afraid ?
Is it a coffin,—or a shroud ?

A grisly idol hewn in stone ?
Or imp from witch's lap let fall ?
Perhaps a ring of shining fairies ?
Such as pursue their feared vagaries
In sylvan bower, or haunted hall ? 510

Is it a fiend that to a stake
Of fire his desperate self is tethering ?
Or stubborn spirit doomed to yell
In solitary ward or cell,
Ten thousand miles from all his brethren ?

Never did pulse so quickly throb,
And never heart so loudly panted ;
He looks, he cannot choose but look ;
Like some one reading in a book—
A book that is enchanted.

520

Ah, well-a-day for Peter Bell !
He will be turned to iron soon,
Meet Statue for the court of Fear !
His hat is up—and every hair
Bristles, and whitens in the moon !

He looks, he ponders, looks again ;
He sees a motion—hears a groan ;
His eyes will burst—his heart will break—
He gives a loud and frightful shriek,
And back he falls, as if his life were flown !

PART SECOND

WE left our Hero in a trance,
Beneath the alders, near the river ;
The Ass is by the river-side,
And, where the feeble breezes glide,
Upon the stream the moonbeams quiver.

531

A happy respite ! but at length
He feels the glimmering of the moon ;
Wakes with glazed eye, and feebly sighing—
To sink, perhaps, where he is lying,
Into a second swoon !

540

He lifts his head, he sees his staff ;
He touches—'tis to him a treasure !
Faint recollection seems to tell
That he is yet where mortals dwell—
A thought received with languid pleasure !

His head upon his elbow propped,
Becoming less and less perplexed,
Sky-ward he looks—to rock and wood—
And then—upon the glassy flood
His wandering eye is fixed. 550

Thought he, that is the face of one
In his last sleep securely bound !
So toward the stream his head he bent,
And downward thrust his staff, intent
The river's depth to sound.

Now—like a tempest-shattered bark,
That overwhelmed and prostrate lies,
And in a moment to the verge
Is lifted of a foaming surge—
Full suddenly the Ass doth rise ! 560

His staring bones all shake with joy,
And close by Peter's side he stands :
While Peter o'er the river bends,
The little Ass his neck extends,
And fondly licks his hands.

Such life is in the Ass's eyes,
Such life is in his limbs and ears ;
That Peter Bell, if he had been
The veriest coward ever seen,
Must now have thrown aside his fears. 570

The Ass looks on—and to his work
Is Peter quietly resigned ;
He touches here—he touches there—
And now among the dead man's hair
His sapling Peter has entwined.

He pulls—and looks—and pulls again ;
And he whom the poor Ass had lost,
The man who had been four days dead,
Head-foremost from the river's bed
Uprises like a ghost !

580

And Peter draws him to dry land ;
And through the brain of Peter pass
Some poignant twitches, fast and faster ;
“ No doubt,” quoth he, “ he is the Master
Of this poor miserable Ass !”

The meagre shadow that looks on—
What would he now ? what is he doing ?
His sudden fit of joy is flown,—
He on his knees hath laid him down,
As if he were his grief renewing ;

590

But no—that Peter on his back
Must mount, he shows well as he can :
Thought Peter then, come weal or woe,
I'll do what he would have me do,
In pity to this poor drowned man.

With that resolve he boldly mounts
Upon the pleased and thankful Ass ;
And then, without a moment's stay,
That earnest Creature turned away,
Leaving the body on the grass.

600

Intent upon his faithful watch,
The Beast four days and nights had past ;
A sweeter meadow ne'er was seen,
And there the Ass four days had been,
Nor ever once did break his fast :

Yet firm his step, and stout his heart ;
The mead is crossed—the quarry's mouth
Is reached ; but there the trusty guide
Into a thicket turns aside,
And deftly ambles towards the south.

610

When hark a burst of doleful sound !
And Peter honestly might say,
The like came never to his ears,
Though he has been, full thirty years,
A rover—night and day !

'Tis not a plover of the moors,
'Tis not a bittern of the fen ;
Nor can it be a barking fox,
Nor night-bird chambered in the rocks,
Nor wild-cat in a woody glen !

620

The Ass is startled—and stops short
Right in the middle of the thicket ;
And Peter, wont to whistle loud
Whether alone or in a crowd,
Is silent as a silent cricket.

What ails you now, my little Bess ?
Well may you tremble and look grave !
This cry—that rings along the wood,
This cry—that floats adown the flood,
Comes from the entrance of a cave :

630

I see a blooming Wood-boy there,
And if I had the power to say
How sorrowful the wanderer is,
Your heart would be as sad as his
Till you had kissed his tears away !

Grasping a hawthorn branch in hand,
All bright with berries ripe and red,
Into the cavern's mouth he peeps ;
Thence back into the moonlight creeps ;
Whom seeks he—whom ?—the silent dead :

His father !—Him doth he require—
Him hath he sought with fruitless pains,
Among the rocks, behind the trees ;
Now creeping on his hands and knees,
Now running o'er the open plains.

641

And hither is he come at last,
When he through such a day has gone,
By this dark cave to be distressed
Like a poor bird—her plundered nest
Hovering around with dolorous moan ! 650

Of that intense and piercing cry
The listening Ass conjectures well ;
Wild as it is, he there can read
Some intermingled notes that plead
With touches irresistible.

But Peter—when he saw the Ass
Not only stop but turn, and change
The cherished tenor of his pace
That lamentable cry to chase—
It wrought in him conviction strange ; 660

A faith that for the dead man's sake,
And this poor slave who loved him well,
Vengeance upon his head will fall,
Some visitation worse than all
Which ever till this night befell.

Meanwhile the Ass to reach his home
Is striving stoutly as he may ;
But, while he climbs the woody hill,
The cry grows weak—and weaker still ;
And now at last it dies away. 670

So with his freight the Creature turns
Into a gloomy grove of beech,
Along the shade with footsteps true
Descending slowly, till the two
The open moonlight reach.

And there, along the narrow dell,
A fair smooth pathway you discern,
A length of green and open road—
As if it from a fountain flowed—
Winding away between the fern. 680

The rocks that tower on either side
Build up a wild fantastic scene ;
Temples like those among the Hindoos,
And mosques, and spires, and abbey-windows,
And castles all with ivy green !

And while the Ass pursues his way
Along this solitary dell,
As pensively his steps advance,
The mosques and spires change countenance,
And look at Peter Bell ! 690

That unintelligible cry
Hath left him high in preparation,—
Convinced that he, or soon or late,
This very night will meet his fate—
And so he sits in expectation !

The strenuous Animal hath clomb
With the green path ; and now he wends
Where, shining like the smoothest sea,
In undisturbed immensity
A level plain extends. 700

But whence this faintly-rustling sound
By which the journeying pair are chased ?
—A withered leaf is close behind,
Light plaything for the sportive wind
Upon that solitary waste.

When Peter spied the moving thing,
It only doubled his distress ;
“ Where there is not a bush or tree,
The very leaves they follow me—
So huge hath been my wickedness !” 710

To a close lane they now are come,
Where, as before, the enduring Ass
Moves on without a moment's stop,
Nor once turns round his head to crop
A bramble-leaf or blade of grass.

Between the hedges as they go,
 The white dust sleeps upon the lane ;
 And Peter, ever and anon
 Back-looking, sees, upon a stone,
 Or in the dust, a crimson stain.

720

A stain—as of a drop of blood
 By moonlight made more faint and wan ;
 Ha ! why these sinkings of despair ?
 He knows not how the blood comes there—
 And Peter is a wicked man.

At length he spies a bleeding wound,
 Where he had struck the Ass's head ;
 He sees the blood, knows what it is,—
 A glimpse of sudden joy was his,
 But then it quickly fled ;

730

Of him whom sudden death had seized
 He thought,—of thee, O faithful Ass !
 And once again those ghastly pains,
 Shoot to and fro through heart and reins,
 And through his brain like lightning pass.

PART THIRD

I'VE heard of one, a gentle Soul,
 Though given to sadness and to gloom,
 And for the fact will vouch,—one night
 It chanced that by a taper's light
 This man was reading in his room ;

740

Bending, as you or I might bend
 At night o'er any pious book,
 When sudden blackness overspread
 The snow-white page on which he read,
 And made the good man round him look.

The chamber walls were dark all round,—
 And to his book he turned again ;
 —The light had left the lonely taper,
 And formed itself upon the paper
 Into large letters—bright and plain !

750

The godly book was in his hand—
And on the page, more black than coal,
Appeared, set forth in strange array,
A *word*—which to his dying day
Perplexed the good man's gentle soul.

The ghostly word, thus plainly seen,
Did never from his lips depart ;
But he hath said, poor gentle wight !
It brought full many a sin to light
Out of the bottom of his heart.

760

Dread Spirits ! to confound the meek
Why wander from your course so far,
Disordering colour, form, and stature !
—Let good men feel the soul of nature,
And see things as they are.

Yet, potent Spirits ! well I know,
How ye, that play with soul and sense,
Are not unused to trouble friends
Of goodness, for most gracious ends—
And this I speak in reverence !

770

But might I give advice to you,
Whom in my fear I love so well ;
From men of pensive virtue go,
Dread Beings ! and your empire show
On hearts like that of Peter Bell.

Your presence often have I felt
In darkness and the stormy night ;
And with like force, if need there be,
Ye can put forth your agency
When earth is calm, and heaven is bright.

780

Then coming from the wayward world,
That powerful world in which ye dwell,
Come, Spirits of the Mind ! and try,
To-night, beneath the moonlight sky,
What may be done with Peter Bell !

—O, would that some more skilful voice
 My further labour might prevent !
 Kind Listeners, that around me sit,
 I feel that I am all unfit
 For such high argument.

790

I've played, I've danced, with my narration ;
 I loitered long ere I began :
 Ye waited then on my good pleasure ;
 Pour out indulgence still, in measure
 As liberal as ye can !

Our Travellers, ye remember well,
 Are thridding a sequestered lane ;
 And Peter many tricks is trying,
 And many anodynes applying,
 To ease his conscience of its pain.

800

By this his heart is lighter far ;
 And, finding that he can account
 So snugly for that crimson stain.
 His evil spirit up again
 Does like an empty bucket mount.

And Peter is a deep logician
 Who hath no lack of wit mercurial ;
 " Blood drops—leaves rustle—yet," quoth he,
 " This poor man never but for me
 Could have had Christian burial.

810

" And, say the best you can, 'tis plain,
 That here has been some wicked dealing ;
 No doubt the devil in me wrought ;
 I'm not the man who could have thought
 An Ass like this was worth the stealing !"

So from his pocket Peter takes
 His shining horn tobacco-box ;
 And in a light and careless way,
 As men who with their purpose play,
 Upon the lid he knocks.

820

Let them whose voice can stop the clouds,
Whose cunning eye can see the wind,
Tell to a curious world the cause
Why, making here a sudden pause,
The Ass turned round his head and *grinned*.

Appalling process ! I have marked
The like on heath, in lonely wood ;
And, verily, have seldom met
A spectacle more hideous—yet
It suited Peter's present mood. 830

And, grinning in his turn, his teeth
He in jocose defiance showed—
When, to upset his spiteful mirth,
A murmur, pent within the earth,
In the dead earth beneath the road,

Rolled audibly !—it swept along,
A muffled noise—a rumbling sound !—
'Twas by a troop of miners made,
Plying with gunpowder their trade,
Some twenty fathoms under ground. 840

Small cause of dire effect ! for, surely,
If ever mortal King or Cotter,
Believed that earth was charged to quake
And yawn for his unworthy sake,
'Twas Peter Bell the Potter.

But as an oak in breathless air
Will stand though to the centre hewn ;
Or as the weakest things, if frost
Have stiffened them, maintain their post ;
So he, beneath the gazing moon !— 850

The Beast bestriding thus, he reached
A spot where, in a sheltering cove,
A little chapel stands alone,
With greenest ivy overgrown,
And tufted with an ivy grove ;

Dying insensibly away
From human thoughts and purposes,
It seemed—wall, window, roof and tower—
To bow to some transforming power,
And blend with the surrounding trees. 860

As ruinous a place it was,
Thought Peter, in the shire of Fife
That served my turn, when following still
From land to land a reckless will
I married my sixth wife !

The unheeding Ass moves slowly on,
And now is passing by an inn
Brim-full of a carousing crew,
That make, with curses not a few,
An uproar and a drunken din. 870

I cannot well express the thoughts
Which Peter in those noises found ;
A stifling power compressed his frame,
While-as a swimming darkness came
Over that dull and dreary sound.

For well did Peter know the sound ;
The language of those drunken joys
To him, a jovial soul, I ween,
But a few hours ago, had been
A gladsome and a welcome noise. 880

Now, turned adrift into the past,
He finds no solace in his course ;
Like planet-stricken men of yore,
He trembles, smitten to the core
By strong compunction and remorse.

But, more than all, his heart is stung
To think of one, almost a child ;
A sweet and playful Highland girl,
As light and beauteous as a squirrel,
As beauteous and as wild ! 890

Her dwelling was a lonely house,
A cottage in a heathy dell ;
And she put on her gown of green,
And left her mother at sixteen,
And followed Peter Bell.

But many good and pious thoughts
Had she ; and, in the kirk to pray,
Two long Scotch miles, through rain or snow,
To kirk she had been used to go,
Twice every Sabbath-day. 900

And, when she followed Peter Bell,
It was to lead an honest life ;
For he, with tongue not used to falter,
Had pledged his troth before the altar
To love her as his wedded wife.

A mother's hope is hers ;—but soon
She drooped and pined like one forlorn ;
From Scripture she a name did borrow ;
Benoni, or the child of sorrow,
She called her babe unborn. 910

For she had learned how Peter lived,
And took it in most grievous part ;
She to the very bone was worn,
And, ere that little child was born,
Died of a broken heart.

And now the Spirits of the Mind
Are busy with poor Peter Bell ;
Upon the rights of visual sense
Usurping, with a prevalence
More terrible than magic spell. 920

Close by a brake of flowering furze
(Above it shivering aspens play)
He sees an unsubstantial creature,
His very self in form and feature,
Not four yards from the broad highway :

And stretched beneath the furze he sees
The Highland girl—it is no other ;
And hears her crying as she cried,
The very moment that she died,
“ My mother ! oh my mother ! ”

930

The sweat pours down from Peter's face,
So grievous is his heart's contrition ;
With agony his eye-balls ache
While he beholds by the furze-brake
This miserable vision !

Calm is the well-deserving brute,
His peace hath no offence betrayed ;
But now, while down that slope he wends,
A voice to Peter's ear ascends,
Resounding from the woody glade :

940

The voice, though clamorous as a horn
Re-echoed by a naked rock,
Comes from that tabernacle—List !
Within, a fervent Methodist
Is preaching to no heedless flock !

“ Repent ! repent ! ” he cries aloud,
“ While yet ye may find mercy ;—strive
To love the Lord with all your might ;
Turn to him, seek him day and night,
And save your souls alive !

950

“ Repent ! repent ! though ye have gone,
Through paths of wickedness and woe,
After the Babylonian harlot ;
And though your sins be red as scarlet,
They shall be white as snow ! ”

Even as he passed the door, these words
Did plainly come to Peter's ears ;
And they such joyful tidings were,
The joy was more than he could bear !—
He melted into tears.

960

Sweet tears of hope and tenderness !
And fast they fell, a plenteous shower !
His nerves, his sinews seemed to melt ;
Through all his iron frame was felt
A gentle, a relaxing, power !

Each fibre of his frame was weak ;
Weak all the animal within ;
But, in its helplessness, grew mild
And gentle as an infant child,
An infant that has known no sin.

970

'Tis said, meek Beast ! that, through Heaven's
grace,

He not unmoved did notice now
The cross upon thy shoulder scored,
For lasting impress, by the Lord
To whom all human-kind shall bow ;

Memorial of his touch—that day
When Jesus humbly deigned to ride,
Entering the proud Jerusalem,
By an immeasurable stream
Of shouting people deified !

980

Meanwhile the persevering Ass
Turned towards a gate that hung in view
Across a shady lane ; his chest
Against the yielding gate he pressed
And quietly passed through.

And up the stony lane he goes ;
No ghost more softly ever trod ;
Among the stones and pebbles he
Sets down his hoofs inaudibly,
As if with felt his hoofs were shod.

990

Along the lane the trusty Ass
Went twice two hundred yards or more,
And no one could have guessed his aim—
Till to a lonely house he came,
And stopped beside the door.

Thought Peter, 'tis the poor man's home.
He listens—not a sound is heard
Save from the trickling household rill ;
But, stepping o'er the cottage-sill,
Forthwith a little Girl appeared.

1000

She to the Meeting-house was bound
In hopes some tidings there to gather :
No glimpse it is, no doubtful gleam ;
She saw—and uttered with a scream,
“ My father ! here's my father ! ”

The very word was plainly heard,
Heard plainly by the wretched Mother—
Her joy was like a deep affright :
And forth she rushed into the light,
And saw it was another !

1010

And instantly upon the earth,
Beneath the full moon shining bright,
Close to the Ass's feet she fell ;
At the same moment Peter Bell
Dismounts in most unhappy plight.

As he beheld the Woman lie
Breathless and motionless, the mind
Of Peter sadly was confused ;
But, though to such demands unused,
And helpless almost as the blind,

1020

He raised her up ; and while he held
Her body propped against his knee,
The Woman waked—and when she spied
The poor Ass standing by her side,
She moaned most bitterly.

“ Oh ! God be praised—my heart's at ease—
For he is dead—I know it well ! ”
—At this she wept a bitter flood ;
And, in the best way that he could,
His tale did Peter tell.

1030

He trembles—he is pale as death ;
His voice is weak with perturbation ;
He turns aside his head, he pauses ;
Poor Peter from a thousand causes
Is crippled sore in his narration.

At length she learned how he espied
The Ass in that small meadow-ground ;
And that her Husband now lay dead,
Beside that luckless river's bed
In which he had been drowned. 1040

A piercing look the Widow cast
Upon the Beast that near her stands ;
She sees 'tis he, that 'tis the same ;
She calls the poor Ass by his name,
And wrings, and wrings her hands.

“ O wretched loss—untimely stroke !
If he had died upon his bed !
He knew not one forewarning pain ;
He never will come home again—
Is dead, for ever dead !” 1050

Beside the Woman Peter stands ;
His heart is opening more and more ;
A holy sense pervades his mind ;
He feels what he for human-kind
Has never felt before.

At length, by Peter's arm sustained,
The Woman rises from the ground—
“ Oh, mercy ! something must be done,
My little Rachel, you must run,—
Some willing neighbour must be found. 1060

“ Make haste—my little Rachel—do,
The first you meet with—bid him come,
Ask him to lend his horse to-night,
And this good Man, whom Heaven requite,
Will help to bring the body home.”

Away goes Rachel weeping loud ;—
An Infant, waked by her distress,
Makes in the house a piteous cry ;
And Peter hears the Mother sigh,
“ Seven are they, and all fatherless !” 1070

And now is Peter taught to feel
That man's heart is a holy thing ;
And Nature, through a world of death,
Breathes into him a second breath,
More searching than the breath of spring.

Upon a stone the Woman sits
In agony of silent grief—
From his own thoughts did Peter start ;
He longs to press her to his heart,
From love that cannot find relief. 1080

But roused, as if through every limb
Had past a sudden shock of dread,
The Mother o'er the threshold flies,
And up the cottage stairs she hies,
And on the pillow lays her burning head.

And Peter turns his steps aside
Into a shade of darksome trees,
Where he sits down, he knows not how.
With his hands pressed against his brow,
His elbows on his tremulous knees. 1090

There, self-involved, does Peter sit
Until no sign of life he makes,
As if his mind were sinking deep
Through years that have been long asleep !
The trance is passed away—he wakes ;

He lifts his head—and sees the Ass
Yet standing in the clear moonshine ;
“ When shall I be as good as thou ?
Oh ! would, poor beast, that I had now
A heart but half as good as thine !” 1100

But *He*—who deviously hath sought
His Father through the lonesome woods,
Hath sought, proclaiming to the ear
Of night his grief and sorrowful fear—
He comes, escaped from fields and floods ;—

With weary pace is drawing nigh ;
He sees the Ass—and nothing living
Had ever such a fit of joy
As hath this little orphan Boy,
For he has no misgiving !

IIIO

Forth to the gentle Ass he springs,
And up about his neck he climbs ;
In loving words he talks to him,
He kisses, kisses face and limb,—
He kisses him a thousand times !

This Peter sees, while in the shade
He stood beside the cottage-door ;
And Peter Bell, the ruffian wild,
Sobs loud, he sobs even like a child,
“ Oh ! God, I can endure no more ! ”

II20

—Here ends my Tale : for in a trice
Arrived a neighbour with his horse ;
Peter went forth with him straightway ;
And, with due care, ere break of day,
Together they brought back the Corse.

And many years did this poor Ass,
Whom once it was my luck to see
Cropping the shrubs of Leming-Lane,
Help by his labour to maintain
The Widow and her family.

II30

And Peter Bell, who, till that night,
Had been the wildest of his clan,
Forsook his crimes, renounced his folly,
And, after ten months' melancholy,
Became a good and honest man.

MISCELLANEOUS SONNETS

DEDICATION

TO —.

HAPPY the feeling from the bosom thrown
In perfect shape (whose beauty Time shall spare
Though a breath made it) like a bubble blown
For summer pastime into wanton air ;
Happy the thought best likened to a stone
Of the sea-beach, when, polished with nice care,
Veins it discovers exquisite and rare,
Which for the loss of that moist gleam atone
That tempted first to gather it. That here,
O chief of Friends ! such feelings I present 10
To thy regard, with thoughts so fortunate,
Were a vain notion ; but the hope is dear
That thou, if not with partial joy elate,
Wilt smile upon this gift with more than mild
content !

NUNS fret not at their convent's narrow room ;
And hermits are contented with their cells ;
And students with their pensive citadels ;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom.
Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for bloom,
High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells :
In truth the prison, unto which we doom

Ourselves, no prison is : and hence for me,
 In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound 10
 Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground ;
 Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
 Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
 Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

ADMONITION

Intended more particularly for the perusal of those who may have
 happened to be enamoured of some beautiful place of Retreat,
 in the Country of the Lakes.

WELL may'st thou halt—and gaze with brightening
 eye !
 The lovely Cottage in the guardian nook
 Hath stirred thee deeply ; with its own dear brook,
 Its own small pasture, almost its own sky !
 But covet not the Abode ;—forbear to sigh,
 As many do, repining while they look ;
 Intruders—who would tear from Nature's book
 This precious leaf, with harsh impiety.
 Think what the Home must be if it were thine,
 Even thine, though few thy wants !—Roof, window,
 door, 10
 The very flowers are sacred to the Poor,
 The roses to the porch which they entwine :
 Yea, all, that now enchants thee, from the day
 On which it should be touched, would melt away.

“ BELOVED Vale !” I said, “ when I shall con
 Those many records of my childish years,
 Remembrance of myself and of my peers
 Will press me down : to think of what is gone
 Will be an awful thought, if life have one.”
 But, when into the Vale I came, no fears
 Distressed me ; from mine eyes escaped no tears ;
 Deep thought, or dread remembrance, had I none.

By doubts and thousand petty fancies crost
I stood, of simple shame the blushing Thrall ; 10
So narrow seemed the brooks, the fields so small !
A Juggler's balls old Time about him tossed ;
I looked, I stared, I smiled, I laughed ; and all
The weight of sadness was in wonder lost.

PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,
Together in immortal books enrolled :
His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold ;
And that inspiring Hill, which " did divide
Into two ample horns his forehead wide,"
Shines with poetic radiance as of old ;
While not an English Mountain we behold
By the celestial Muses glorified.
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in crowds :
What was the great Parnassus' self to Thee, 10
Mount Skiddaw ? In his natural sovereignty
Our British Hill is nobler far ; he shrouds
His double front among Atlantic clouds,
And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly.

THERE is a little unpretending Rill
Of limpid water, humbler far than aught
That ever among Men or Naiads sought
Notice or name !—It quivers down the hill,
Furrowing its shallow way with dubious will ;
Yet to my mind this scanty Stream is brought
Oftener than Ganges or the Nile ; a thought
Of private recollection sweet and still !
Months perish with their moons ; year treads on
year ;
But, faithful Emma ! thou with me canst say 10
That, while ten thousand pleasures disappear,
And flies their memory fast almost as they ;
The immortal Spirit of one happy day
Lingers beside that Rill, in vision clear.

UPON THE SIGHT OF A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE

PAINTED BY SIR G. H. BEAUMONT, BART.

PRAISED be the Art whose subtle power could stay
 Yon cloud, and fix it in that glorious shape ;
 Nor would permit the thin smoke to escape,
 Nor those bright sunbeams to forsake the day ;
 Which stopped that band of travellers on their way,
 Ere they were lost within the shady wood ;
 And showed the Bark upon the glassy flood
 For ever anchored in her sheltering bay.
 Soul-soothing Art ! whom Morning, Noontide, Even,
 Do serve with all their changeful pageantry ; 10
 Thou, with ambition modest yet sublime,
 Here, for the sight of mortal man, hast given
 To one brief moment caught from fleeting time
 The appropriate calm of blest eternity.

TO SLEEP

L

O GENTLE Sleep ! do they belong to thee,
 These twinklings of oblivion ? Thou dost love
 To sit in meekness, like the brooding Dove,
 A captive never wishing to be free.
 This tiresome night, O Sleep ! thou art to me
 A Fly, that up and down himself doth shove
 Upon a fretful rivulet, now above,
 Now on the water vexed with mockery.
 I have no pain that calls for patience, no ;
 Hence am I cross and peevish as a child : 10
 Am pleased by fits to have thee for my foe,
 Yet ever willing to be reconciled :
 O gentle Creature ! do not use me so,
 But once and deeply let me be beguiled.

TO SLEEP

II.

FOND words have oft been spoken to thee, Sleep !
 And thou hast had thy store of tenderest names ;
 The very sweetest Fancy culls or frames,
 When thankfulness of heart is strong and deep !
 Dear Bosom-child we call thee, that dost steep
 In rich reward all suffering ; Balm that tames
 All anguish ; Saint that evil thoughts and aims
 Takest away, and into souls dost creep,
 Like to a breeze from heaven. Shall I alone,
 I surely not a man ungently made, 10
 Call thee worst Tyrant by which Flesh is crost ?
 Perverse, self-willed to own and to disown,
 Mere slave of them who never for thee prayed,
 Still last to come where thou art wanted most !

III.

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
 One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees
 Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky ;
 I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie
 Sleepless ! and soon the small birds' melodies
 Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees ;
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
 Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay
 And could not win thee, Sleep ! by any stealth : 10
 So do not let me wear to-night away :
 Without Thee what is all the morning's wealth ?
 Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

CATHERINE WORDSWORTH

(DIED JUNE 5, 1812.)

SURPRISED by joy—impatient as the Wind
 I turned to share the transport—Oh ! with whom
 But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,
 That spot which no vicissitude can find ?

Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—
But how could I forget thee ? Through what power,
Even for the least division of an hour,
Have I been so beguiled as to be blind
To my most grievous loss !—That thought's return
Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore, 10
Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,
Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more ;
That neither present time, nor years unborn
Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

I.

METHOUGHT I saw the footsteps of a throne
Which mists and vapours from mine eyes did shroud—
Nor view of who might sit thereon allowed ;
But all the steps and ground about were strown
With sights the ruefullest that flesh and bone
Ever put on ; a miserable crowd,
Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before that cloud,
“Thou art our king, O Death ! to thee we groan.”
Those steps I clomb ; the mists before me gave
Smooth way ; and I beheld the face of one 10
Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,
With her face up to heaven ; that seemed to have
Pleasing remembrance of a thought foregone ;
A lovely Beauty in a summer grave !

NOVEMBER, 1836

II.

EVEN so for me a Vision sanctified
The sway of Death ; long ere mine eyes had seen
Thy countenance—the still rapture of thy mien—
When thou, dear Sister ! wert become Death's Bride :
No trace of pain or languor could abide
That change :—age on thy brow was smoothed—thy
cold
Wan cheek at once was privileged to unfold .
A loveliness to living youth denied.

Oh ! if within me hope should e'er decline,
 The lamp of faith, lost Friend ! too faintly burn ;
 Then may that heaven-revealing smile of thine, 11
 The bright assurance, visibly return :
 And let my spirit in that power divine
 Rejoice, as, through that power, it ceased to mourn.

COMPOSED UPON THE BEACH NEAR CALAIS

AUGUST, 1802.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun
 Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea :
 Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.
 Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me here,
 If thou appear untouched by solemn thought, 10
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine :
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
 And worshipp'st at the Temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

WHERE lies the Land to which yon Ship must go ?
 Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,
 Festively she puts forth in trim array ;
 Is she for tropic suns, or polar snow ?
 What boots the enquiry ?—Neither friend nor foe
 She cares for ; let her travel where she may,
 She finds familiar names, a beaten way
 Ever before her, and a wind to blow.
 Yet still I ask, what haven is her mark ?
 And, almost as it was when ships were rare, 10
 (From time to time, like Pilgrims, here and there
 Crossing the waters) doubt, and something dark,
 Of the old Sea some reverential fear,
 Is with me at thy farewell, joyous Bark !

WITH Ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh,
 Like stars in heaven, and joyously it showed ;
 Some lying fast at anchor in the road,
 Some veering up and down, one knew not why.
 A goodly Vessel did I then espy
 Come like a giant from a haven broad ;
 And lustily along the bay she strode,
 Her tackling rich, and of apparel high.
 This Ship was nought to me, nor I to her,
 Yet I pursued her with a Lover's look ; 10
 This Ship to all the rest did I prefer :
 When will she turn, and whither ? She will brook
 No tarrying ; where She comes the winds must stir :
 On went She, and due north her journey took.

THE world is too much with us ; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers ;
 Little we see in Nature that is ours ;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !
 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;
 It moves us not.—Great God ! I'd rather be
 A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn ; 10
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

A VOLANT Tribe of Bards on earth are found,
 Who, while the flattering Zephyrs round them play,
 On "coignes of vantage" hang their nests of clay ;
 How quickly from that aery hold unbound,
 Dust for oblivion ! To the solid ground
 Of nature trusts the Mind that builds for aye ;
 Convinced that there, there only, she can lay
 Secure foundations. As the year runs round,

Apart she toils within the chosen ring ;
 While the stars shine, or while day's purple eye
 Is gently closing with the flowers of spring ; II
 Where even the motion of an Angel's wing
 Would interrupt the intense tranquillity
 Of silent hills, and more than silent sky.

"WEAK is the will of Man, his judgement blind ;
 Remembrance persecutes, and Hope betrays ;
 Heavy is woe ;—and joy, for human-kind,
 A mournful thing, so transient is the blaze !"
 Thus might *he* paint our lot of mortal days
 Who wants the glorious faculty assigned
 To elevate the more-than-reasoning Mind,
 And colour life's dark cloud with orient rays.
 Imagination is that sacred power,
 Imagination lofty and refined : 10
 'Tis hers to pluck the amaranthine flower
 Of Faith, and round the sufferer's temples bind
 Wreaths that endure affliction's heaviest shower,
 And do not shrink from sorrow's keenest wind.

TO THE MEMORY OF RAISLEY CALVERT

CALVERT ! it must not be unheard by them
 Who may respect my name that I to thee
 Owed many years of early liberty.
 This care was thine when sickness did condemn
 Thy youth to hopeless wasting, root and stem—
 That I, if frugal and severe, might stray
 Where'er I liked ; and finally array
 My temples with the Muse's diadem.
 Hence, if in freedom I have loved the truth ;
 If there be aught of pure, or good, or great, 10
 In my past verse ; or shall be, in the lays
 Of higher mood, which now I meditate ;—
 It gladdens me, O worthy, short-lived Youth !
 To think how much of this will be thy praise.

SCORN not the Sonnet ; Critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honours ; with this key
Shakspeare unlocked his heart ; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound ;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound ;
With it Camœns soothed an exile's grief ;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow : a glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land 10
To struggle through dark ways ; and when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet ; whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few !

TO B. R. HAYDON

HIGH is our calling, Friend !—Creative Art
(Whether the instrument of words she use,
Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,)
Demands the service of a mind and heart,
Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,
Heroically fashioned—to infuse
Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,
While the whole world seems adverse to desert.
And, oh ! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,
Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress, 10
Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,
And in the soul admit of no decay,
Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness—
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard !

I WATCH, and long have watched, with calm regret
Yon slowly-sinking star—immortal Sire
(So might he seem) of all the glittering quire !
Blue ether still surrounds him—yet—and yet ;

But now the horizon's rocky parapet
 Is reached, where, forfeiting his bright attire,
 He burns—transmuted to a dusky fire—
 Then pays submissively the appointed debt
 To the flying moments, and is seen no more.
 Angels and gods ! We struggle with our fate, 10
 While health, power, glory, from their height
 decline,
 Depressed ; and then extinguished : and our state,
 In this, how different, lost Star, from thine,
 That no to-morrow shall our beams restore !

RETIREMENT

If the whole weight of what we think and feel.
 Save only far as thought and feeling blend
 With action, were as nothing, patriot Friend !
 From thy remonstrance would be no appeal ;
 But to promote and fortify the weal
 Of her own Being is her paramount end ;
 A truth which they alone shall comprehend
 Who shun the mischief which they cannot heal.
 Peace in these feverish times is sovereign bliss :
 Here, with no thirst but what the stream can slake,
 And startled only by the rustling brake, 11
 Cool air I breathe ; while the unincumbered Mind,
 By some weak aims at services assigned
 To gentle Natures, thanks not Heaven amiss.

NOT Love, not War, nor the tumultuous swell
 Of civil conflict, nor the wrecks of change,
 Nor Duty struggling with afflictions strange—
 Not these *alone* inspire the tuneful shell ;
 But where untroubled peace and concord dwell,
 There also is the Muse not loth to range,
 Watching the twilight smoke of cot or grange,
 Skyward ascending from a woody dell.

Meek aspirations please her, lone endeavour,
And sage content, and placid melancholy; 10
She loves to gaze upon a crystal river—
Diaphanous because it travels slowly;
Soft is the music that would charm for ever;
The flower of sweetest smell is shy and lowly.

NOVEMBER 1

How clear, how keen, how marvellously bright
The effluence from yon distant mountain's head,
Which, strewn with snow smooth as the sky can
shed,
Shines like another sun--on mortal sight
Uprisen, as if to check approaching Night,
And all her twinkling stars. Who now would
tread,
If so he might, yon mountain's glittering head—
Terrestrial, but a surface, by the flight
Of sad mortality's earth-sullying wing,
Unswept, unstained? Nor shall the aerial Powers
Dissolve that beauty, destined to endure, 11
White, radiant, spotless, exquisitely pure,
Through all vicissitudes, till genial Spring,
Has filled the laughing vales with welcome flowers.

COMPOSED DURING A STORM

ONE who was suffering tumult in his soul
Yet failed to seek the sure relief of prayer,
Went forth—his course surrendering to the care
Of the fierce wind, while mid-day lightnings prowl
Insidiously, untimely thunders growl;
While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied numbers, tear
The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,
And shivering wolves, surprised with darkness,
howl

As if the sun were not. He raised his eye
 Soul-smitten ; for, that instant did appear 10
 Large space ('mid dreadful clouds) of purest sky,
 An azure disc—shield of Tranquillity ;
 Invisible, unlooked-for, minister
 Of providential goodness ever nigh !

TO THE LADY MARY LOWTHER

With a selection from the Poems of Anne, Countess of Winchilsea ;
 and extracts of similar character from other Writers ; transcribed
 by a female friend.

LADY ! I rifled a Parnassian Cave
 (But seldom trod) of mildly-gleaming ore ;
 And culled, from sundry beds, a lucid store
 Of genuine crystals, pure as those that pave
 The azure brooks, where Dian joys to lave
 Her spotless limbs ; and ventured to explore
 Dim shades—for reliques, upon Lethe's shore,
 Cast up at random by the sullen wave,
 To female hands the treasures were resigned ;
 And lo this Work !—a grotto bright and clear 10
 From stain or taint ; in which thy blameless mind
 May feed on thoughts though pensive not austere ;
 Or, if thy deeper spirit be inclined
 To holy musing, it may enter here.

TO LADY BEAUMONT

LADY ! the songs of Spring were in the grove
 While I was shaping beds for winter flowers ;
 While I was planting green unfading bowers,
 And shrubs—to hang upon the warm alcove,
 And sheltering wall ; and still, as Fancy wove
 The dream, to time and nature's blended powers
 I gave this paradise for winter hours,
 A labyrinth, Lady ! which your feet shall rove.

Yes ! when the sun of life more feebly shines,
 Becoming thoughts, I trust, of solemn gloom 10
 Or of high gladness you shall hither bring ;
 And these perennial bowers and murmuring pines
 Be gracious as the music and the bloom
 And all the mighty ravishment of spring.

THERE is a pleasure in poetic pains
Which only Poets know ;—’twas rightly said ;
 Whom could the Muses else allure to tread
 Their smoothest paths, to wear their lightest
 chains ?

When happiest Fancy has inspired the strains,
 How oft the malice of one luckless word
 Pursues the Enthusiast to the social board,
 Haunts him belated on the silent plains !
 Yet he repines not, if his thought stand clear,
 At last, of hindrance and obscurity, 10
 Fresh as the star that crowns the brow of morn ;
 Bright, speckless, as a softly-moulded tear
 The moment it has left the virgin’s eye,
 Or rain-drop lingering on the pointed thorn.

HAIL, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful hour !
 Not dull art Thou as undiscerning Night ;
 But studious only to remove from sight
 Day’s mutable distinctions.—Ancient Power !
 Thus did the waters gleam, the mountains lower,
 To the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin vest
 Here roving wild, he laid him down to rest
 On the bare rock, or through a leafy bower
 Looked ere his eyes were closed. By him was seen
 The self-same Vision which we now behold, 10
 At thy meek bidding, shadowy Power ! brought
 forth ;

These mighty barriers, and the gulf between ;
 The flood, the stars,—a spectacle as old
 As the beginning of the heavens and earth !

“WITH how sad steps, O Moon, thou climb'st the sky,

How silently, and with how wan a face !”

Where art thou ? Thou so often seen on high

Running among the clouds a Wood-nymph's race !

Unhappy Nuns, whose common breath's a sigh

Which they would stifle, move at such a pace !

The northern Wind, to call thee to the chase,

Must blow to-night his bugle horn. Had I

The power of Merlin, Goddess ! this should be :

And all the stars, fast as the clouds were riven, 10

Should sally forth, to keep thee company,

Hurrying and sparkling through the clear blue
heaven ;

But, Cynthia ! should to thee the palm be given,

Queen both for beauty and for majesty.

EVEN as a dragon's eye that feels the stress

Of a bedimmed sleep, or as a lamp

Sullenly glaring through sepulchral damp,

So burns yon Taper 'mid a black recess

Of mountains, silent, dreary, motionless :

The lake below reflects it not ; the sky

Muffled in clouds, affords no company

To mitigate and cheer its loneliness.

Yet, round the body of that joyless Thing

Which sends so far its melancholy light,

Perhaps are seated in domestic ring

A gay society with faces bright,

Conversing, reading, laughing ;—or they sing,

While hearts and voices in the song unite.

10

BROOK ! whose society the Poet seeks,

Intent his wasted spirits to renew ;

And whom the curious Painter doth pursue

Through rocky passes, among flowery creeks,

And tracks thee dancing down thy water-breaks ;

If wish were mine some type of thee to view,
Thee, and not thee thyself, I would not do
Like Grecian Artists, give thee human cheeks,
Channels for tears ; no Naiad shouldst thou be,—
Have neither limbs, feet, feathers, joints, nor hairs :
It seems the Eternal Soul is clothed in thee 11
With purer robes than those of flesh and blood,
And hath bestowed on thee a safer good ;
Unwearied joy, and life without its cares.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

SEPTEMBER 3, 1802.

EARTH has not anything to show more fair :
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty :
This City now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky ;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill ; 10
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
The river glideth at his own sweet will :
Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
And all that mighty heart is lying still !

COMPOSED AMONG THE RUINS OF A CASTLE
IN NORTH WALES

THROUGH shattered galleries, 'mid roofless halls,
Wandering with timid footsteps oft betrayed,
The Stranger sighs, nor scruples to upbraid
Old Time, though he, gentlest among the Thralls
Of Destiny, upon these wounds hath laid
His lenient touches, soft as light that falls,
From the wan Moon, upon the towers and walls,
Light deepening the profoundest sleep of shade.

Relic of Kings ! Wreck of forgotten wars,
 To winds abandoned and the prying stars, 10
 Time loves Thee ! at his call the Seasons twine
 Luxuriant wreaths around thy forehead hoar ;
 And, though past pomp no changes can restore,
 A soothing recompense, his gift, is thine !

TO THE TORRENT AT THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE, NORTH WALES, 1824

How art thou named ? In search of what strange
 land,
 From what huge height, descending ? Can such force
 Of waters issue from a British source,
 Or hath not Pindus fed thee, where the band
 Of Patriots scoop their freedom out, with hand
 Desperate as thine ? Or come the incessant shocks
 From that young Stream, that smites the throbbing
 rocks,
 Of Viamala ? There I seem to stand,
 As in life's morn ; permitted to behold,
 From the dread chasm, woods climbing above,
 woods, 10
 In pomp that fades not ; everlasting snows ;
 And skies that ne'er relinquish their repose ;
 Such power possess the family of floods
 Over the minds of Poets, young or old !

TO THE CUCKOO

Not the whole warbling grove in concert heard
 When sunshine follows shower, the breast can thrill
 Like the first summons, Cuckoo ! of thy bill,
 With its twin notes inseparably paired.
 The captive 'mid damp vaults unsunned, unaired,
 Measuring the periods of his lonely doom,
 That cry can reach ; and to the sick man's room
 Sends gladness, by no languid smile declared.

The lordly eagle-race through hostile search
 May perish ; time may come when never more 10
 The wilderness shall hear the lion roar ;
 But, long as cock shall crow from household perch
 To rouse the dawn, soft gales shall speed thy wing,
 And thy erratic voice be faithful to the Spring !

TO ——, IN HER SEVENTIETH YEAR

SUCH age how beautiful ! O Lady bright,
 Whose mortal lineaments seem all refined
 By favouring Nature and a saintly Mind
 To something purer and more exquisite
 Than flesh and blood ; whene'er thou meet'st my
 sight,
 When I behold thy blanched unwithered cheek,
 Thy temples fringed with locks of gleaming white,
 And head that droops because the soul is meek,
 Thee with the welcome Snowdrop I compare ;
 That child of winter, prompting thoughts that
 climb 10
 From desolation toward the genial prime ;
 Or with the Moon conquering earth's misty air,
 And filling more and more with crystal light
 As pensive Evening deepens into night.

TO ROTH A Q——

ROTHA, my Spiritual Child ! this head was grey
 When at the sacred font for thee I stood ;
 Pledged till thou reach the verge of womanhood,
 And shalt become thy own sufficient stay :
 Too late, I feel, sweet Orphan ! was the day
 For steadfast hope the contract to fulfil ;
 Yet shall my blessing hover o'er thee still,
 Embodied in the music of this Lay,

Breathed forth beside the peaceful mountain
Stream

9

Whose murmur soothed thy languid Mother's ear
After her throes, this Stream of name more dear
Since thou dost bear it,—a memorial theme
For others ; for thy future self, a spell
To summon fancies out of Time's dark cell.

A TRADITION OF OKER HILL IN DARLEY DALE, DERBYSHIRE

'Tis said that to the brow of yon fair hill
Two Brothers clomb, and, turning face from face,
Nor one look more exchanging, grief to still
Or feed, each planted on that lofty place
A chosen Tree ; then, eager to fulfil
Their courses, like two new-born rivers, they
In opposite directions urged their way
Down from the far-seen mount. No blast might
kill

Or blight that fond memorial ;—the trees grew,
And now entwine their arms ; but ne'er again 10
Embraced those Brothers upon earth's wide plain ;
Nor aught of mutual joy or sorrow knew
Until their spirits mingled in the sea
That to itself takes all, Eternity.

TO THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT

Painted at Rydal Mount, by W. Pickersgill, Esq., for St. John's
College, Cambridge.

Go, faithful Portrait ! and where long hath knelt
Margaret, the saintly Foundress, take thy place ;
And, if Time spare the colours for the grace
Which to the work surpassing skill hath dealt,

Thou, on thy rock reclined, though kingdoms melt
 And states be torn up by the roots, wilt seem
 To breathe in rural peace, to hear the stream,
 And think and feel as once the Poet felt.
 Whate'er thy fate, those features have not grown
 Unrecognised through many a household tear 10
 More prompt, more glad, to fall than drops of dew
 By morning shed around a flower half-blown ;
 Tears of delight, that testified how true
 To life thou art, and, in thy truth, how dear !

WHY art thou silent ! Is thy love a plant
 Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
 Of absence withers what was once so fair ?
 Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant ?
 Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant—
 Bound to thy service with unceasing care,
 The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
 For nought but what thy happiness could spare.
 Speak—though this soft warm heart, once free to
 hold
 A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine, 10
 Be left more desolate, more dreary cold
 Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow
 'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—
 Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may
 know !

A POET !—He hath put his heart to school,
 Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff
 Which Art hath lodged within his hand—must
 laugh
 By precept only, and shed tears by rule.
 Thy Art be Nature ; the live current quaff,
 And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
 In fear that else, when Critics grave and cool
 Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.

How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold ?
 Because the lovely little flower is free 10
 Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold ;
 And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
 Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
 But from its *own* divine vitality.

COMPOSED ON A MAY MORNING, 1838

LIFE with yon Lambs, like day, is just begun,
 Yet Nature seems to them a heavenly guide.
 Does joy approach ? they meet the coming tide ;
 And sullenness avoid, as now they shun
 Pale twilight's lingering glooms,—and in the sun
 Couch near their dams, with quiet satisfied ;
 Or gambol—each with his shadow at his side,
 Varying its shape wherever he may run.
 As they from turf yet hoar with sleepy dew
 All turn, and court the shining and the green, 10
 Where herbs look up, and opening flowers are seen ;
 Why to God's goodness cannot We be true,
 And so, His gifts and promises between,
 Feed to the last on pleasures ever new ?

TO A PAINTER

ALL praise the Likeness by thy skill portrayed ;
 But 'tis a fruitless task to paint for me,
 Who, yielding not to changes Time has made,
 By the habitual light of memory see
 Eyes unbedimmed, see bloom that cannot fade,
 And smiles that from their birthplace ne'er shall
 flee
 Into the land where ghosts and phantoms be ;
 And, seeing this, own nothing in its stead.
 Couldst thou go back into far-distant years,
 Or share with me, fond thought ! that inward
 eye, 10

Then, and then only, Painter ! could thy Art
 The visual powers of Nature satisfy,
 Which hold, whate'er to common sight appears,
 Their sovereign empire in a faithful heart.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT

THOUGH I beheld at first with blank surprise
 This Work, I now have gazed on it so long
 I see its truth with unreluctant eyes ;
 O, my Belovèd ! I have done thee wrong,
 Conscious of blessedness, but, whence it sprung,
 Ever too heedless, as I now perceive :
 Morn into noon did pass, noon into eve,
 And the old day was welcome as the young,
 As welcome, and as beautiful—in sooth
 More beautiful, as being a thing more holy : 10
 Thanks to thy virtues, to the eternal youth
 Of all thy goodness, never melancholy ;
 To thy large heart and humble mind, that cast
 Into one vision, future, present, past.

HARK ! 'tis the Thrush, undaunted, undeprest,
 By twilight premature of cloud and rain ;
 Nor does that roaring wind deaden his strain
 Who carols thinking of his Love and nest,
 And seems, as more incited, still more blest.
 Thanks ; thou hast snapped a fireside Prisoner's
 chain,

Exulting Warbler ! eased a fretted brain,
 And in a moment charmed my cares to rest.
 Yes, I will forth, bold Bird ! and front the blast,
 That we may sing together, if thou wilt, 10
 So loud, so clear, my Partner through life's day,
 Mute in her nest love-chosen, if not love-built
 Like thine, shall gladden, as in seasons past,
 Thrilled by loose snatches of the social Lay.

'Tis He whose yester-evening's high disdain
 Beat back the roaring storm—but how subdued
 His day-break note, a sad vicissitude !
 Does the hour's drowsy weight his glee restrain ?
 Or, like the nightingale, her joyous vein
 Pleased to renounce, does this dear Thrush attune
 His voice to suit the temper of yon Moon
 Doubly depressed, setting, and in her wane ?
 Rise, tardy Sun ! and let the Songster prove
 (The balance trembling between night and morn 10
 No longer) with what ecstasy upborne
 He can pour forth his spirit. In heaven above,
 And earth below, they best can serve true gladness
 Who meet most feelingly the calls of sadness.

WANSFELL !¹ this Household has a favoured lot,
 Living with liberty on thee to gaze,
 To watch while Morn first crowns thee with her
 rays,
 Or when along thy breast serenely float
 Evening's angelic clouds. Yet ne'er a note
 Hath sounded (shame upon the Bard !) thy praise
 For all that thou, as if from heaven, hast brought
 Of glory lavished on our quiet days.
 Bountiful Son of Earth ! when we are gone
 From every object dear to mortal sight, 10
 As soon we shall be, may these words attest
 How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone
 Thy visionary majesties of light,
 How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found rest.

In my mind's eye a Temple, like a cloud
 Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,
 Rose out of darkness : the bright Work stood still ;
 And might of its own beauty have been proud,

¹ The Hill that rises to the south-east, above Ambleside.

But it was fashioned and to God was vowed
 By Virtues that diffused, in every part,
 Spirit divine through forms of human art :
 Faith had her arch—her arch, when winds blow loud,
 Into the consciousness of safety thrilled ;
 And Love her towers of dread foundation laid 10
 Under the grave of things ; Hope had her spire
 Star-high, and pointing still to something higher ;
 Trembling I gazed, but heard a voice—it said,
 “ Hell-gates are powerless Phantoms when *we* build.”

ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY

I.

Is then no nook of English ground secure
 From rash assault ?¹ Schemes of retirement sown
 In youth, and 'mid the busy world kept pure
 As when their earliest flowers of hope were blown,
 Must perish ;—how can they this blight endure ?
 And must he too the ruthless change bemoan
 Who scorns a false utilitarian lure
 'Mid his paternal fields at random thrown ?
 Baffle the threat, bright Scene, from Orrest-head
 Given to the pausing traveller's rapturous glance :
 Plead for thy peace, thou beautiful romance 11
 Of nature ; and, if human hearts be dead,
 Speak, passing winds ; ye torrents, with your strong
 And constant voice, protest against the wrong.

¹ The degree and kind of attachment which many of the yeomanry feel to their small inheritances can scarcely be over-rated. Near the house of one of them stands a magnificent tree, which a neighbour of the owner advised him to fell for profit's sake. “ Fell it ! ” exclaimed the yeoman, “ I had rather fall on my knees and worship it.” It happens, I believe, that the intended railway would pass through this little property, and I hope that an apology for the answer will not be thought necessary by one who enters into the strength of the feeling.

ON THE PROJECTED KENDAL AND WINDERMERE RAILWAY

II.

PROUD were ye, Mountains, when, in times of old,
Your patriot sons, to stem invasive war,
Intrenched your brows ; ye gloried in each scar :
Now, for your shame, a Power, the Thirst of Gold,
That rules o'er Britain like a baneful star,
Wills that your peace, your beauty, shall be sold,
And clear way made for her triumphal car
Through the beloved retreats your arms enfold !
Hear YE that Whistle ? As her long-linked Train
Swept onwards, did the vision cross your view ? 10
Yes, ye were startled ;—and, in balance true,
Weighing the mischief with the promised gain,
Mountains, and Vales, and Floods, I call on you
To share the passion of a just disdain.

AT FURNESS ABBEY

WELL have yon Railway Labourers to THIS ground
Withdrawn for noontide rest. They sit, they walk
Among the Ruins, but no idle talk
Is heard ; to grave demeanour all are bound ;
And from one voice a Hymn with tuneful sound
Hallows once more the long-deserted Quire
And thrills the old sepulchral earth, around.
Others look up, and with fixed eyes admire
That wide-spanned arch, wondering how it was
raised,
To keep, so high in air, its strength and grace : 10
All seem to feel the spirit of the place,
And by the general reverence God is praised :
Profane Despoilers, stand ye not reprov'd,
While thus these simple-hearted men are moved ?

MEMORIALS OF TOURS IN SCOTLAND 1803 AND 1814.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS (1803)

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH.

I SHIVER, Spirit fierce and bold,
At thought of what I now behold :
As vapours breathed from dungeons cold
Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I then thy bones so near,
And thou forbidden to appear ?
As if it were thyself that's here
I shrink with pain ;
And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

10

Off weight—nor press on weight !—away
Dark thoughts !—they came, but not to stay ;
With chastened feelings would I pay
The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower, whose modest worth
He sang, his genius “glinted” forth,
Rose like a star that touching earth,
For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
With matchless beams.

20

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
 The struggling heart, wherè be they now ?—
 Full soon the Aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,
 Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
 And silent grave.

30

I mourned with thousands, but as one
 More deeply grieved, for He was gone
 Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
 And showed my youth
 How Verse may build a princely throne
 On humble truth.

Alas ! where'er the current tends,
 Regret pursues and with it blends,—
 Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
 By Skiddaw seen,—
 Neighbours we were, and loving friends
 We might have been ;

40

True friends though diversely inclined ;
 But heart with heart and mind with mind,
 Where the main fibres are entwined,
 Through Nature's skill,
 May even by contraries be joined
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
 Thou " poor Inhabitant below,"
 At this dread moment—even so—
 Might we together
 Have sate and talked where gowans blow,
 Or on wild heather.

50

What treasures would have then been placed
 Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
 By fancy what a rich repast !
 But why go on ?—
 Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
 His grave grass-grown.

60

There, too, a Son, his joy and pride,
 (Not three weeks past the Stripling died,)
 Lies gathered to his Father's side,
 Soul-moving sight !
 Yet one to which is not denied
 Some sad delight.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
 Hath early found among the dead,
 Harboured where none can be misled,
 Wronged, or distrest ;
 And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

70

And oh for Thee, by pitying grace
 Checked oft-times in a devious race,
 May He, who halloweth the place
 Where Man is laid,
 Receive thy Spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed !

Sighing I turned away ; but ere
 Night fell I heard, or seemed to hear,
 Music that sorrow comes not near,
 A ritual hymn,
 Chanted in love that casts out fear
 By Seraphim.

80

THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF
 NITH, NEAR THE POET'S RESIDENCE.

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
 That must have followed when his brow
 Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us how—
 With holly spray,
 He faltered, drifted to and fro,
 And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear Sister, throng
 Our minds when, lingering all too long,
 Over the grave of Burns we hung
 In social grief—
 Indulged as if it were a wrong
 To seek relief.

10

But, leaving each unquiet theme
 Where gentlest judgments may misdeem,
 And prompt to welcome every gleam
 Of good and fair,
 Let us beside the limpid Stream
 Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight ;
 Think rather of those moments bright
 When to the consciousness of right
 His course was true,
 When Wisdom prospered in his sight
 And virtue grew.

20

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
 Freely as in youth's season bland,
 When side by side, his Book in hand.
 We wont to stray,
 Our pleasure varying at command
 Of each sweet Lay.

30

How oft inspired must he have trod
 These pathways, yon far-stretching road !
 There lurks his home ; in that Abode,
 With mirth elate,
 Or in his nobly-pensive mood,
 The Rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that Image overawes,
 Before it humbly let us pause,
 And ask of Nature from what cause
 And by what rules
 She trained her Burns to win applause
 That shames the Schools.

40

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
 Are felt the flashes of his pen ;
 He rules 'mid winter snows, and when
 Bees fill their hives ;
 Deep in the general heart of men
 His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
 Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime, 50
 And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
 From genuine springs,
 Shall dwell together till old Time
 Folds up his wings ?

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of Heaven
 This Minstrel lead, his sins forgiven ;
 The rueful conflict, the heart riven
 With vain endeavour,
 And memory of Earth's bitter leaven,
 Effaced for ever. 60

But why to Him confine the prayer,
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
 On the frail heart the purest share
 With all that live ?—
 The best of what we do and are,
 Just God, forgive !

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL

AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND.

SWEET Highland Girl, a very shower
 Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
 Twice seven consenting years have shed
 Their utmost bounty on thy head :
 And these grey rocks ; that household lawn ;
 Those trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
 This fall of water that doth make
 A murmur near the silent lake ;

This little bay ; a quiet road
 That holds in shelter thy Abode— 10
 In truth together do ye seem
 Like something fashioned in a dream ;
 Such Forms as from their covert peep
 When earthly cares are laid asleep !
 But, O fair Creature ! in the light
 Of common day, so heavenly bright,
 I bless Thee, Vision as thou art,
 I bless thee with a human heart ;
 God shield thee to thy latest years !
 Thee, neither know I, nor thy peers ; 20
 And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
 For thee when I am far away :
 For never saw I mien, or face,
 In which more plainly I could trace
 Benignity and home-bred sense
 Ripening in perfect innocence.
 Here scattered, like a random seed,
 Remote from men, Thou dost not need
 The embarrassed look of shy distress, 30
 And maidenly shamefacedness :
 Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
 The freedom of a Mountaineer :
 A face with gladness overspread !
 Soft smiles, by human kindness bred !
 And seemliness complete, that sways
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
 With no restraint, but such as springs
 From quick and eager visitings
 Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach 40
 Of thy few words of English speech :
 A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
 That gives thy gestures grace and life !
 So have I, not unmoved in mind,
 Seen birds of tempest-loving kind—
 Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
For thee who art so beautiful ?
O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
Beside thee in some heathy dell ; 50
Adopt your homely ways, and dress,
A Shepherd, thou a Shepherdess !
But I could frame a wish for thee
More like a grave reality :
Thou art to me but as a wave
Of the wild sea ; and I would have
Some claim upon thee, if I could,
Though but of common neighbourhood.
What joy to hear thee, and to see !
Thy elder Brother I would be, 60
Thy Father—anything to thee !

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
Hath led me to this lonely place.
Joy have I had ; and going hence
I bear away my recompense.
In spots like these it is we prize
Our Memory, feel that she hath eyes :
Then, why should I be loth to stir ?
I feel this place was made for her ;
To give new pleasure like the past, 70
Continued long as life shall last.
Nor am I loth, though pleased at heart,
Sweet Highland Girl ! from thee to part ;
For I, methinks, till I grow old,
As fair before me shall behold,
As I do now, the cabin small,
The lake, the bay, the waterfall ;
And Thee, the Spirit of them all !

GLEN ALMAIN

OR, THE NARROW GLEN.

IN this still place, remote from men,
 Sleeps Ossian, in the NARROW GLEN ;
 In this still place, where murmurs on
 But one meek streamlet, only one :
 He sang of battles, and the breath
 Of stormy war, and violent death ;
 And should, methinks, when all was past,
 Have rightfully been laid at last
 Where rocks were rudely heaped, and rent
 As by a spirit turbulent ; 10
 Where sights were rough, and sounds were
 wild,
 And everything unreconciled ;
 In some complaining, dim retreat,
 For fear and melancholy meet ;
 But this is calm ; there cannot be
 A more entire tranquillity.

Does then the Bard sleep here indeed ?
 Or is it but a groundless creed ?
 What matters it ?—I blame them not
 Whose Fancy in this lonely Spot 20
 Was moved ; and in such way expressed
 Their notion of its perfect rest.
 A convent, even a hermit's cell,
 Would break the silence of this Dell :
 It is not quiet, is not ease ;
 But something deeper far than these :
 The separation that is here
 Is of the grave ; and of austere
 Yet happy feelings of the dead :
 And, therefore, was it rightly said 30
 That Ossian, last of all his race !
 Lies buried in this lonely place.

STEPPING WESTWARD

While my Fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Ketterine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a Hut where, in the course of our Tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed Women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward?"

"*WHAT, you are stepping westward?*"—"Yea."
 —'Twould be a *wildish* destiny,
 If we, who thus together roam
 In a strange Land, and far from home,
 Were in this place the guests of Chance :
 Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
 Though home or shelter he had none,
 With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;
 Behind, all gloomy to behold ;
 And stepping westward seemed to be
 A kind of *heavenly* destiny :
 I liked the greeting ; 'twas a sound
 Of something without place or bound ;
 And seemed to give me spiritual right
 To travel through that region bright.

10

The voice was soft, and she who spake
 Was walking by her native lake :
 The salutation had to me
 The very sound of courtesy :
 Its power was felt ; and while my eye
 Was fixed upon the glowing Sky,
 The echo of the voice enwrought
 A human sweetness with the thought
 Of travelling through the world that lay
 Before me in my endless way.

20

THE SOLITARY REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland Lass !
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
 And sings a melancholy strain ;
 O listen ! for the Vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
 More welcome notes to weary bands
 Of travellers in some shady haunt,
 Among Arabian sands :
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
 In spring-time from the Cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

10

Will no one tell me what she sings ?—
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For old, unhappy, far-off things,
 And battles long ago :
 Or is it some more humble lay,
 Familiar matter of to-day ?
 Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
 That has been, and may be again ?

20

Whate'er the theme, the Maiden sang
 As if her song could have no ending ;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending ;—
 I listened, motionless and still ;
 And, as I mounted up the hill,
 The music in my heart I bore,
 Long after it was heard no more.

30

ADDRESS TO KILCHURN CASTLE, UPON LOCH
AWE

“ From the top of the hill a most impressive scene opened upon our view,—a ruined Castle on an Island (for an Island the flood had made it) at some distance from the shore. backed by a Cove of the Mountain Cruachan, down which came a foaming stream. The Castle occupied every foot of the Island that was visible to us, appearing to rise out of the water,—mists rested upon the mountain side, with spots of sunshine ; there was a mild desolation in the low grounds, a solemn grandeur in the mountains, and the Castle was wild, yet stately—not dismantled of turrets—nor the walls broken down, though obviously a ruin.”—*Extract from the Journal of my Companion.*

CHILD of loud-throated War ! the mountain Stream
 Roars in thy hearing ; but thy hour of rest
 Is come, and thou art silent in thy age ;
 Save when the wind sweeps by and sounds are caught
 Ambiguous, neither wholly thine nor theirs.
 Oh ! there is life that breathes not ; Powers there are
 That touch each other to the quick in modes
 Which the gross world no sense hath to perceive,
 No soul to dream of. What art Thou, from care
 Cast off—abandoned by thy rugged Sire, 10
 Nor by soft Peace adopted ; though, in place
 And in dimension, such that thou might'st seem
 But a mere footstool to yon sovereign Lord,
 Huge Cruachan, (a thing that meaner hills
 Might crush, nor know that it had suffered harm ;)
 Yet he, not loth, in favour of thy claims
 To reverence, suspends his own ; submitting
 All that the God of Nature hath conferred,
 All that he holds in common with the stars,
 To the memorial majesty of Time 20
 Impersonated in thy calm decay !
 Take, then, thy seat, Vicegerent unreprieved !
 Now, while a farewell gleam of evening light
 Is fondly lingering on thy shattered front,
 Do thou, in turn, be paramount ; and rule
 Over the pomp and beauty of a scene
 Whose mountains, torrents, lake, and woods, unite
 To pay thee homage ; and with these are joined,

In willing admiration and respect, 29
 Two Hearts, which in thy presence might be called
 Youthful as Spring.—Shade of departed Power,
 Skeleton of unfleshed humanity,
 The chronicle were welcome that should call
 Into the compass of distinct regard
 The toils and struggles of thy infant years !
 Yon foaming flood seems motionless as ice ;
 Its dizzy turbulence eludes the eye,
 Frozen by distance ; so, majestic Pile,
 To the perception of this Age, appear
 Thy fierce beginnings, softened and subdued 40
 And quieted in character—the strife,
 The pride, the fury uncontrollable,
 Lost on the aerial heights of the Crusades !¹

ROB ROY'S GRAVE

The history of Rob Roy is sufficiently known ; his grave is near the head of Loch Ketterine, in one of those small pinfold-like Burial-grounds, of neglected and desolate appearance, which the traveller meets with in the Highlands of Scotland.

A FAMOUS man is Robin Hood,
 The English ballad-singer's joy !
 And Scotland has a thief as good,
 An outlaw of as daring mood ;
 She has her brave Rob Roy !
 Then clear the weeds from off his Grave,
 And let us chant a passing stave,
 In honour of that Hero brave !

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart
 And wondrous length and strength of arm : 10
 Nor craved he more to quell his foes,
 Or keep his friends from harm.

¹ The tradition is, that the Castle was built by a Lady during the absence of her Lord in Palestine.

Yet was Rob Roy as *wise* as brave ;
 Forgive me if the phrase be strong ;—
 A Poet worthy of Rob Roy
 Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave ;
 As wise in thought as bold in deed :
 For in the principles of things
 He sought his moral creed. 20

Said generous Rob, “ What need of books ?
 Burn all the statutes and their shelves :
 They stir us up against our kind ;
 And worse, against ourselves.

“ We have a passion—make a law,
 Too false to guide us or control !
 And for the law itself we fight
 In bitterness of soul.

“ And, puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
 Distinctions that are plain and few : 30
 These find I graven on my heart :
 That tells me what to do.

“ The creatures see of flood and field,
 And those that travel on the wind !
 With them no strife can last ; they live
 In peace, and peace of mind.

“ For why ?—because the good old rule
 Sufficeth them, the simple plan,
 That they should take, who have the power,
 And they should keep who can. 40

“ A lesson that is quickly learned,
 A signal this which all can see !
 Thus nothing here provokes the strong
 To wanton cruelty.

“ All freakishness of mind is checked ;
 He tamed, who foolishly aspires ;
 While to the measure of his might
 Each fashions his desires.

“ All kinds, and creatures, stand and fall
 By strength of prowess or of wit :
 'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
 And who is to submit.

50

“ Since, then, the rule of right is plain,
 And longest life is but a day ;
 To have my ends, maintain my rights,
 I'll take the shortest way.”

And thus among these rocks he lived,
 Through summer heat and winter snow :
 The Eagle, he was lord above,
 And Rob was lord below.

60

So was it—*would*, at least, have been
 But through untowardness of fate ;
 For Polity was then too strong—
 He came an age too late ;

Or shall we say an age too soon ?
 For, were the bold Man living *now*,
 How might he flourish in his pride,
 With buds on every bough !

Then rents and factors, rights of chase,
 Sheriffs, and lairds and their domains,
 Would all have seemed but paltry things,
 Not worth a moment's pains.

70

Rob Roy had never lingered here,
 'To these few meagre Vales confined ;
 But thought how wide the world, the times
 How fairly to his mind !

And to his Sword he would have said,
 "Do Thou my sovereign will enact
 From land to land through half the earth !
 Judge thou of law and fact !

80

"'Tis fit that we should do our part,
 Becoming that mankind should learn
 That we are not to be surpassed
 In fatherly concern.

"Of old things all are over old,
 Of good things none are good enough :—
 We'll show that we can help to frame
 A world of other stuff.

"I, too, will have my kings that take
 From me the sign of life and death :

90

Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,
 Obedient to my breath."

And, if the word had been fulfilled,
 As *might* have been, then, thought of joy !
 France would have had her present Boast,
 And we our own Rob Roy !

Oh ! say not so ; compare them not ;
 I would not wrong thee, Champion brave !
 Would wrong thee nowhere ; least of all
 Here standing by thy grave.

100

For Thou, although with some wild thoughts,
 Wild Chieftain of a savage Clan !
 Hadst this to boast of ; thou didst love
 The *liberty* of man.

And, had it been thy lot to live
 With us who now behold the light,
 Thou wouldst have nobly stirred thyself,
 And battled for the Right.

For thou wert still the poor man's stay, 109
 The poor man's heart, the poor man's hand ;
 And all the oppressed, who wanted strength,
 Had thine at their command.

Bear witness many a pensive sigh
 Of thoughtful Herdsman when he strays
 Alone upon Loch Veol's heights,
 And by Loch Lomond's braes.

And, far and near, through vale and hill,
 Are faces that attest the same ;
 The proud heart flashing through the eyes,
 At sound of ROB ROY's name. 120

SONNET

COMPOSED AT NEIDPATH CASTLE.

DEGENERATE Douglas ! oh, the unworthy Lord !
 Whom mere despite of heart could so far please,
 And love of havoc, (for with such disease
 Fame taxes him,) that he could send forth word
 To level with the dust a noble horde,
 A brotherhood of venerable Trees,
 Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,
 Beggared and outraged !—Many hearts deplored
 The fate of those old Trees ; and oft with pain
 The traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze 10
 On wrongs, which Nature scarcely seems to heed
 For sheltered places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
 And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed
 And the green silent pastures, yet remain.

YARROW UNVISITED

See the various Poems the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow ; in particular, the exquisite Ballad of Hamilton beginning—

“ Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny Bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow ! ”

FROM Stirling castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled ;
Had trod the banks of Clyde, and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled ;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my “ *winsome Marrow,* ”
“ Whate’er betide, we’ll turn aside,
And see the Braes of Yarrow.”

“ Let Yarrow folk, *frae* Selkirk town,
Who have been buying, selling. 10
Go back to Yarrow, ’tis their own ;
Each maiden to her dwelling !
On Yarrow’s banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow !
But we will downward with the Tweed
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

“ There’s Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us ;
And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus ; 20
There’s pleasant Tiviot-dale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow :
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow ?

“ What’s Yarrow but a river bare,
That glides the dark hills under ?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder.”

— Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn ;
 My True-love sighed for sorrow ; 30
 And looked me in the face, to think
 I thus could speak of Yarrow !

“ Oh ! green,” said I, “ are Yarrow’s holms,
 And sweet is Yarrow flowing !
 Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,¹
 But we will leave it growing.
 O’er hilly path, and open Strath,
 We’ll wander Scotland thorough ;
 But, though so near, we will not turn
 Into the dale of Yarrow. 40

“ Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
 The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;
 The swan on still St. Mary’s Lake
 Float double, swan and shadow !
 We will not see them ; will not go,
 To-day, nor yet to-morrow ;
 Enough if in our hearts we know
 There’s such a place as Yarrow.

“ Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !
 It must, or we shall rue it : 50
 We have a vision of our own ;
 Ah ! why should we undo it ?
 The treasured dreams of times long past,
 We’ll keep them, winsome Marrow !
 For when we’re there, although ’tis fair,
 ’Twill be another Yarrow !

“ If Care with freezing years should come,
 And wandering seem but folly,—
 Should we be loth to stir from home,
 And yet be melancholy ; 60
 Should life be dull, and spirits low,
 ’Twill soothe us in our sorrow,
 That earth hath something yet to show,
 The Lonny holms of Yarrow !”

¹ See Hamilton’s Ballad as above.

SONNET

IN THE PASS OF KILLICRANKY.

An invasion being expected, October, 1803.

Six thousand veterans practised in war's game,
Tried men, at Killicranky were arrayed
Against an equal host that wore the plaid,
Shepherds and herdsmen.—Like a whirlwind came
The Highlanders, the slaughter spread like flame ;
And Garry, thundering down his mountain-road,
Was stopped, and could not breathe beneath the load
Of the dead bodies.—'Twas a day of shame
For them whom precept and the pedantry
Of cold mechanic battle do enslave. 10
O for a single hour of that Dundee,
Who on that day the word of onset gave !
Like conquest would the Men of England see ;
And her Foes find a like inglorious grave.

FLY, SOME KIND HARBINGER

FLY, some kind Harbinger, to Grasmere-dale !
Say that we come, and come by this day's light ;
Fly upon the swiftest wing round field and height,
But chiefly let one Cottage hear the tale ;
There let a mystery of joy prevail,
The kitten frolic, like a gamesome sprite,
And Rover whine, as at a second sight
Of near-approaching good that shall not fail :
And from that Infant's face let joy appear ;
Yea, let our Mary's one companion child— 10
That hath her six weeks' solitude beguiled
With intimations manifold and dear, .
While we have wandered over wood and wild—
Smile on his Mother now with bolder cheer.

THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY

A TALE TOLD BY THE FIRE-SIDE, AFTER RETURNING TO
THE VALE OF GRASMERE.

Now we are tired of boisterous joy,
Have romped enough, my little Boy !
Jane hangs her head upon my breast,
And you shall bring your stool and rest ;
This corner is your own.

There ! take your seat, and let me see
That you can listen quietly :
And, as I promised, I will tell
That strange adventure which befell
A poor blind Highland Boy.

10

A *Highland* Boy !—why call him so ?
Because, my Darlings, ye must know
That, under hills which rise like towers,
Far higher hills than these of ours !
He from his birth had lived.

He ne'er had seen one earthly sight ;
The sun, the day ; the stars, the night ;
Or tree, or butterfly, or flower,
Or fish in stream, or bird in bower,
Or woman, man, or child.

20

And yet he neither drooped nor pined,
Nor had a melancholy mind ;
For God took pity on the Boy,
And was his friend ; and gave him joy
Of which we nothing know.

His Mother, too, no doubt, above
Her other children him did love :
For was she here, or was she there,
She thought of him with constant care,
And more than mother's love.

30

And proud she was of heart, when clad
In crimson stockings, tartan plaid,
And bonnet with a feather gay,
To Kirk he on the sabbath day
Went hand in hand with her.

A dog, too, had he ; not for need,
But one to play with and to feed ;
Which would have led him, if bereft
Of company or friends, and left
Without a better guide.

40

And then the bagpipes he could blow—
And thus from house to house would go ;
And all were pleased to hear and see,
For none made sweeter melody
Than did the poor blind Boy.

Yet he had many a restless dream ;
Both when he heard the eagles scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near which their cottage stood.

50

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small like ours, a peaceful flood ;
But one of mighty size, and strange ;
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,
The great Sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills,
And drinks up all the pretty rills
And rivers large and strong :

60

Then hurries back the road it came—
Returns, on errand still the same ;
This did it when the earth was new ;
And this for evermore will do,
As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
 Come boats and ships that safely ride
 Between the woods and lofty rocks ;
 And to the shepherds with their flocks
 Bring tales of distant lands.

70

And of those tales, whate'er they were,
 The blind Boy always had his share ;
 Whether of mighty towns, or vales
 With warmer suns and softer gales,
 Or wonders of the Deep.

Yet more it pleased him, more it stirred,
 When from the water-side he heard
 The shouting, and the jolly cheers ;
 The bustle of the mariners
 In stillness or in storm.

80

But what do his desires avail ?
 For He must never handle sail ;
 Nor mount the mast, nor row, nor float
 In sailor's ship, or fisher's boat,
 Upon the rocking waves.

His Mother often thought, and said,
 What sin would be upon her head
 If she should suffer this : " My Son,
 Whate'er you do, leave this undone ;
 The danger is so great."

90

Thus lived he by Loch Leven's side
 Still sounding with the sounding tide,
 And heard the billows leap and dance,
 Without a shadow of mischance,
 Till he was ten years old.

When one day (and now mark me well,
 Ye soon shall know how this befell)
 He in a vessel of his own
 On the swift flood is hurrying down,
 Down to the mighty Sea.

100

In such a vessel never more
May human creature leave the shore !
If this or that way he should stir,
Woe to the poor blind Mariner !
For death will be his doom.

But say what bears him ?—Ye have seen
The Indian's bow, his arrows keen,
Rare beasts, and birds with plumage bright ;
Gifts which, for wonder or delight,
Are brought in ships from far. 110

Such gifts had those seafaring men
Spread round that haven in the glen ;
Each hut, perchance, might have its own ;
And to the Boy they all were known—
He knew and prized them all.

The rarest was a Turtle-shell
Which he, poor Child, had studied well ;
A shell of ample size, and light
As the pearly car of Amphitrite,
That sportive dolphins drew. 120

And, as a Coracle that braves
On Vaga's breast the fretful waves,
This shell upon the deep would swim,
And gaily lift its fearless brim
Above the tossing surge.

And this the little blind Boy knew ;
And he a story strange yet true
Had heard, how in a shell like this
An English Boy, O thought of bliss !
Had stoutly launched from shore ; 130

Launched from the margin of a bay
Among the Indian isles, where lay
His father's ship, and had sailed far—
To join that gallant ship of war,
In his delightful shell.

Our Highland Boy oft visited
 The house that held this prize ; and, led
 By choice or chance, did thither come
 One day when no one was at home,
 And found the door unbarred.

140

While there he sate, alone and blind,
 That story flashed upon his mind ;—
 A bold thought roused him, and he took
 The shell from out its secret nook,
 And bore it on his head.

He launched his vessel,—and in pride
 Of spirit, from Loch Leven's side,
 Stepped into it—his thoughts all free
 As the light breezes that with glee
 Sang through the adventurer's hair.

150

A while he stood upon his feet ;
 He felt the motion—took his seat ;
 Still better pleased as more and more
 The tide retreated from the shore,
 And sucked, and sucked him in.

And there he is in face of Heaven.
 How rapidly the Child is driven !
 The fourth part of a mile, I ween,
 He thus had gone, ere he was seen
 By any human eye.

160

But when he was first seen, oh me
 What shrieking and what misery !
 For many saw ; among the rest
 His Mother, she who loved him best,
 She saw her poor blind Boy.

But for the child, the sightless Boy,
 It is the triumph of his joy !
 The bravest traveller in balloon,
 Mounting as if to reach the moon,
 Was never half so blessed

170

And let him, let him go his way,
Alone, and innocent, and gay !
For, if good Angels love to wait
On the forlorn unfortunate,
 This Child will take no harm.

But now the passionate lament,
Which from the crowd on shore was sent,
The cries which broke from old and young
In Gaelic, or the English tongue,
 Are stifled—all is still.

180

And quickly with a silent crew
A boat is ready to pursue ;
And from the shore their course they take,
And swiftly down the running lake
 They follow the blind Boy.

But soon they move with softer pace ;
So have ye seen the fowler chase
On Grasmere's clear unruffled breast
A youngling of the wild-duck's nest
 With deftly-lifted oar ;

190

Or as the wily sailors crept
To seize (while on the Deep it slept)
The hapless creature which did dwell
Erewhile within the dancing shell,
 They steal upon their prey.

With sound the least that can be made,
They follow, more and more afraid,
More cautious as they draw more near ;
But in his darkness he can hear,
 And guesses their intent.

200

“ *Lei-gha—Lei-gha* ”—he then cried out,
“ *Lei-gha—Lei-gha* ”—with eager shout ;
Thus did he cry, and thus did pray,
And what he meant was “ Keep away,
 And leave me to myself ! ”

Alas ! and when he felt their hands——
 You've often heard of magic wands,
 That with a motion overthrow
 A palace of the proudest show,
 Or melt it into air :

210

So all his dreams—that inward light
 With which his soul had shone so bright—
 All vanished ;—'twas a heartfelt cross
 To him, a heavy, bitter loss,
 As he had ever known.

But hark ! a gratulating voice,
 With which the very hills rejoice :
 'Tis from the crowd, who tremblingly
 Have watched the event, and now can see
 That he is safe at last.

220

And then, when he was brought to land,
 Full sure they were a happy band,
 Which, gathering round, did on the banks
 Of that great Water give God thanks,
 And welcomed the poor Child.

And in the general joy of heart
 The blind Boy's little dog took part ;
 He leapt about, and oft did kiss
 His master's hands in sign of bliss,
 With sound like lamentation.

230

But most of all, his Mother dear,
 She who had fainted with her fear,
 Rejoiced when waking she espies
 The Child ; when she can trust her eyes.
 And touches the blind Boy.

She led him home, and wept amain,
 When he was in the house again :
 Tears flowed in torrents from her eyes ;
 She kissed him—how could she chastise ?
 She was too happy far.

240

Thus, after he had fondly braved
The perilous Deep, the Boy was saved ;
And, though his fancies had been wild,
Yet he was pleased and reconciled
To live in peace on shore.

And in the lonely Highland dell
Still do they keep the Turtle-shell ;
And long the story will repeat
Of the blind Boy's adventurous feat,
And how he was preserved.

250

Note.—It is recorded in “ Dampier's Voyages ” that a boy, son of the captain of a Man-of-War, seated himself in a Turtle-shell, and floated in it from the shore to his father's ship, which lay at anchor at the distance of half a mile. In deference to the opinion of a Friend, I have substituted such a shell for the less elegant vessel in which my blind Voyager did actually entrust himself to the dangerous current of Loch Leven, as was related to me by an eye-witness.

YARROW VISITED

SEPTEMBER, 1814.

AND is this—Yarrow ?—*This* the Stream
Of which my fancy cherished,
So faithfully, a waking dream ?
An image that hath perished !
O that some Minstrel's harp were near,
To utter notes of gladness,
And chase this silence from the air,
That fills my heart with sadness !

Yet why ?—a silvery current flows
With uncontrolled meanderings ;
Nor have these eyes by greener hills
Been soothed, in all my wanderings.
And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
Is visibly delighted ;
For not a feature of those hills
Is in the mirror slighted.

10

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
 Save where that pearly whiteness
 Is round the rising sun diffused ;
 A tender hazy brightness ; 20
 Mild dawn of promise ! that excludes
 All profitless dejection ;
 Though not unwilling here to admit
 A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
 Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding ?
 His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
 On which the herd is feeding :
 And haply from this crystal pool,
 Now peaceful as the morning, 30
 The Water-wraith ascended thrice—
 And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the Lay that sings
 The haunts of happy Lovers,
 The path that leads them to the grove,
 The leafy grove that covers :
 And Pity sanctifies the Verse
 That paints, by strength of sorrow,
 The unconquerable strength of love ;
 Bear witness, rueful Yarrow ! 40

But thou, that didst appear so fair
 To fond imagination,
 Dost rival in the light of day
 Her delicate creation :
 Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
 A softness still and holy ;
 The grace of forest charms decayed,
 And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
 Rich groves of lofty stature, 50
 With Yarrow winding through the pomp
 Of cultivated nature ;

And, rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a Ruin hoary !
The shattered front of Newark's Towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in ;
For manhood to enjoy his strength ;
And age to wear away in ! 60
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts, that nestle there—
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet, on this autumnal day,
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my True-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather !
And what if I enwreathed my own !
'Twere no offence to reason ; 70
The sober Hills thus deck their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;
A ray of fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee !
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure ;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure. 80

The vapours linger round the Heights,
They melt, and soon must vanish ;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought, which I would banish,
But that I know, where'er I go,
Thy genuine image, Yarrow !
Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,
And cheer my mind in sorrow.

POEMS DEDICATED TO NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND LIBERTY

COMPOSED BY THE SEASIDE

NEAR CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802:

FAIR Star of evening, Splendour of the west,
Star of my Country!—on the horizon's brink
Thou hangest, stooping, as might seem, to sink
On England's bosom; yet well pleased to rest,
Meanwhile, and be to her a glorious crest
Conspicuous to the Nations. Thou, I think,
Shouldst be my Country's emblem; and shouldst
wink,

Bright Star! with laughter on her banners, drest
In thy fresh beauty. There! that dusky spot
Beneath thee, that is England; there she lies. 10
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory!—I, with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
Among men who do not love her, linger here.

CALAIS, AUGUST, 1802

Is it a reed that's shaken by the wind,
Or what is it that ye go forth to see?
Lords, lawyers, statesmen, squires of low degree,
Men known, and men unknown, sick, lame, and
blind,
Post forward all, like creatures of one kind,

With first-fruit offerings crowd to bend the knee
 In France, before the new-born Majesty.
 'Tis ever thus. Ye men of prostrate mind,
 A seemly reverence may be paid to power ;
 But that's a loyal virtue, never sown 10
 In haste, nor springing with a transient shower :
 When truth, when sense, when liberty were flown,
 What hardship had it been to wait an hour ?
 Shame on you, feeble Heads, to slavery prone !

COMPOSED NEAR CALAIS

ON THE ROAD LEADING TO ARDRES, AUGUST 7, 1802.

JONES ! as from Calais southward you and I
 Went pacing side by side, this public Way
 Streamed with the pomp of a too-credulous day.¹
 When faith was pledged to new-born Liberty :
 A homeless sound of joy was in the sky :
 From hour to hour the antiquated Earth
 Beat like the heart of Man : songs, garlands, mirth,
 Banners, and happy faces, far and nigh !
 And now, sole register that these things were,
 Two solitary greetings have I heard, 10
 " *Good morrow, Citizen !*" a hollow word,
 As if a dead man spake it ! Yet despair
 Touches me not, though pensive as a bird
 Whose vernal coverts winter hath laid bare.

1801

I GRIEVED for Buonaparté, with a vain
 And an unthinking grief ! The tenderest mood
 Of that Man's mind—what can it be ? what food
 Fed his first hopes ? what knowledge could he gain ?
 'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
 The Governor who must be wise and good,

¹ July 14, 1790.

And temper with the sternness of the brain
 Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
 Wisdom doth live with children round her knees :
 Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk 10
 Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
 Of the mind's business : these are the degrees
 By which true Sway doth mount ; this is the stalk
 True Power doth grow on ; and her rights are these.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC

ONCE did She hold the gorgeous east in fee ;
 And was the safeguard of the west : the worth
 Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
 Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
 She was a maiden City, bright and free ;
 No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
 And, when she took unto herself a Mate,
 She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
 And what if she had seen those glories fade,
 Those titles vanish, and that strength decay ; 10
 Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
 When her long life hath reached its final day :
 Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
 Of that which once was great is passed away.

TO TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE

TOUSSAINT, the most unhappy man of men !
 Whether the whistling Rustic tend his plough
 Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
 Pillowed in some deep dungeon's earless den ;—
 O miserable Chieftain ! where and when
 Wilt thou find patience ! Yet die not ; do thou
 Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow :
 'Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
 Live, and take comfort. Thou hast left behind

Powers that will work for thee ; air, earth, and
skies ; 10

There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee ; thou hast great allies ;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.

SEPTEMBER, 1802. NEAR DOVER

INLAND, within a hollow vale, I stood ;
And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
The coast of France—the coast of France how near !
Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.
I shrunk ; for verily the barrier flood
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
A span of waters ; yet what power is there !
What mightiness for evil and for good !
Even so doth God protect us if we be
Virtuous and wise. Winds blow, and waters roll,
Strength to the brave, and Power, and Deity ; 11
Yet in themselves are nothing ! One decree
Spake laws to *them*, and said that by the soul
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON

ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZERLAND:

Two Voices are there ; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains ; each a mighty Voice :
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :
Thou from thy Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft :
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ; 10

For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee !

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802

O FRIEND ! I know not which way I must look
For comfort, being, as I am, opprest,
To think that now our life is only drest
For show ; mean handy-work of craftsman, cook,
Or groom !—We must run glittering like a brook
In the open sunshine, or we are unblest :
The wealthiest man among us is the best :
No grandeur now in nature or in book
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
This is idolatry ; and these we adore :
Plain living and high thinking are no more :
The homely beauty of the good old cause
Is gone ; our peace, our fearful innocence,
And pure religion breathing household laws.

10

LONDON, 1802

MILTON ! thou shouldst be living at this hour :
England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart ;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea :
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

11

GREAT men have been among us ; hands that
penned

And tongues that uttered wisdom—better none :

The later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington,

Young Vane, and others who called Milton friend.

These moralists could act and comprehend :

They knew how genuine glory was put on ;

Taught us how rightfully a nation shone

In splendour : what strength was, that would not
bend

But in magnanimous meekness. France, 'tis strange,
Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.

Perpetual emptiness ! unceasing change ! 11

No single volume paramount, no code,

No master spirit, no determined road ;

But equally a want of books and men !

It is not to be thought of that the Flood
Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
Hath flowed, " with pomp of waters, unwithstood,"

Roused though it be full often to a mood

Which spurns the check of salutary bands,

That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands

Should perish ; and to evil and to good

Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung

Armoury of the invincible Knights of old : 10

We must be free or die, who speak the tongue

That Shakespeare spake ; the faith and morals hold

Which Milton held.—In every thing we are sprung

Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

WHEN I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed

I had, my Country—am I to be blamed ?
 Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
 Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
 Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
 For dearly must we prize thee ; we who find
 In thee a bulwark for the cause of men ;
 And I by my affection was beguiled :
 What wonder if a Poet now and then,
 Among the many movements of his mind,
 Felt for thee as a lover or a child !

10

OCTOBER, 1803

THESE times strike monied worldlings with dismay :
 Even rich men, brave by nature, taint the air
 With words of apprehension and despair :
 While tens of thousands, thinking on the affray,
 Men unto whom sufficient for the day
 And minds not stinted or untilled are given,
 Sound, healthy, children of the God of heaven,
 Are cheerful as the rising sun in May.
 What do we gather hence but firmer faith
 That every gift of noble origin
 Is breathed upon by Hope's perpetual breath ;
 That virtue and the faculties within
 Are vital,—and that riches are akin
 To fear, to change, to cowardice, and death ?

10

ENGLAND ! the time is come when thou shouldst
 wean
 Thy heart from its emasculating food ;
 The truth should now be better understood ;
 Old things have been unsettled ; we have seen
 Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
 But for thy trespasses ; and, at this day,
 If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
 Aught good were destined, thou wouldst step be-
 tween.

England ! all nations in this charge agree :
 But worse, more ignorant in love and hate, 10
 Far—far more abject, is thine Enemy :
 Therefore the wise pray for thee, though the freight
 Of thy offences be a heavy weight :
 Oh grief that Earth's best hopes rest all with Thee !

TO THE MEN OF KENT

OCTOBER, 1803.

VANGUARD of Liberty, ye men of Kent,
 Ye children of a Soil that doth advance
 Her haughty brow against the coast of France,
 Now is the time to prove your hardiment !
 To France be words of invitation sent !
 They from their fields can see the countenance
 Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,
 And hear you shouting forth your brave intent.
 Left single, in bold parley, ye, of yore,
 Did from the Norman win a gallant wreath ; 10
 Confirmed the charters that were yours before ;—
 No parleying now. In Britain is one breath ;
 We all are with you now from shore to shore ;—
 Ye men of Kent, 'tis victory or death !

LINES ON THE EXPECTED INVASION, 1803

COME ye—who, if (which Heaven avert !) the Land
 Were with herself at strife, would take your stand,
 Like gallant Falkland, by the Monarch's side,
 And, like Montrose, make Loyalty your pride—
 Come ye—who, not less zealous, might display
 Banners at enmity with regal sway,
 And, like the Pym's and Miltons of that day,
 Think that a State would live in sounder health
 If Kingship bowed its head to Commonwealth—
 Ye too—whom no discreditable fear 10
 Would keep, perhaps with many a fruitless tear,

Uncertain what to choose and how to steer—
 And ye—who might mistake for sober sense
 And wise reserve the plea of indolence—
 Come ye—whate'er your creed—O waken all,
 Whate'er your temper, at your Country's call ;
 Resolving (this a free-born Nation can)
 To have one Soul, and perish to a man,
 Or save this honoured Land from every Lord
 But British reason and the British sword.

20

ANTICIPATION. OCTOBER, 1803

SHOUT, for a mighty Victory is won !
 On British ground the Invaders are laid low ;
 The breath of Heaven has drifted them like snow,
 And left them lying in the silent sun,
 Never to rise again !—the work is done.
 Come forth, ye old men, now in peaceful show
 And greet your sons ! drums beat and trumpets blow !
 Make merry, wives ! ye little children, stun
 Your grandame's ears with pleasure of your noise !
 Clap, infants, clap your hands ! Divine must be
 That triumph, when the very worst, the pain, II
 And even the prospect of our brethren slain,
 Hath something in it which the heart enjoys :—
 In glory will they sleep and endless sanctity.

NOVEMBER, 1806

ANOTHER year !—another deadly blow !
 Another mighty Empire¹ overthrown !
 And We are left, or shall be left, alone ;
 The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
 'Tis well ! from this day forward we shall know
 That in ourselves our safety must be sought ;
 That by our own right hands it must be wrought ;
 That we must stand unproped, or be laid low.

¹ Written after the overthrow of Prussia in the Battle of Jena, October 14, 1806.

O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer !
We shall exult, if they who rule the land 10
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant ; not a servile band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

TO THOMAS CLARKSON

ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL FOR THE
ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE, MARCH, 1807.

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to climb :
How toilsome—nay, how dire—it was, by thee
Is known ; by none, perhaps, so feelingly :
But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,
Didst first lead forth that enterprise sublime,
Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,
Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
First roused thee.—O true yoke-fellow of Time,
Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
Is won, and by all Nations shall be worn ! 10
The blood-stained Writing is for ever torn ;
And thou henceforth wilt have a good man's calm,
A great man's happiness ; thy zeal shall find
Repose at length, firm friend of human kind !

COMPOSED BY THE SIDE OF GRASMERE
LAKE

CLOUDS, lingering yet, extend in solid bars
Through the grey west ; and lo ! these waters, steeled
By breezeless air to smoothest polish, yield
A vivid repetition of the stars ;
Jove, Venus, and the ruddy crest of Mars
Amid his fellows beauteously revealed
At happy distance from earth's groaning field,
Where ruthless mortals wage incessant wars.

Is it a mirror ?—or the nether Sphere
 Opening to view the abyss in which she feeds 10
 Her own calm fires ?—But list ! a voice is near ;
 Great Pan himself low-whispering through the
 reeds,
 “ Be thankful, thou ; for, if unholy deeds
 Ravage the world, tranquillity is here ! ”

COMPOSED WHILE THE AUTHOR WAS ENGAGED IN WRIT-
 ING A TRACT OCCASIONED BY THE CONVENTION OF
 CINTRA.

Not 'mid the World's vain objects that enslave
 The free-born Soul—that World whose vaunted
 skill
 In selfish interest perverts the will,
 Whose factions lead astray the wise and brave—
 Not there ; but in dark wood and rocky cave,
 And hollow vale which foaming torrents fill
 With omnipresent murmur as they rave
 Down their steep beds, that never shall be still :
 Here, mighty Nature ! in this school sublime
 I weigh the hopes and fears of suffering Spain ; 10
 For her consult the auguries of time,
 And through the human heart explore my way ;
 And look and listen—gathering whence I may,
 Triumph, and thoughts no bondage can restrain.

HOFER

Of mortal parents is the Hero born
 By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led ?
 Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead
 Returned to animate an age forlorn ?
 He comes like Phœbus through the gates of morn
 When dreary darkness is discomfited,
 Yet mark his modest state ! upon his head,
 That simple crest, a heron's plume, is worn.

O Liberty ! they stagger at the shock
From van to rear—and with one mind would flee,
But half their host is buried :—rock on rock II
Descends :—beneath this godlike Warrior, see !
Hills, torrents, woods, embodied to bemock
The Tyrant, and confound his cruelty.

ADVANCE—come forth from thy Tyrolean ground,
Dear Liberty ! stern Nymph of soul untamed ;
Sweet Nymph, O rightly of the mountains named !
Through the long chain of Alps from mound to
 mound
And o'er the eternal snows, like Echo, bound ;
Like Echo, when the hunter train at dawn
Have roused her from her sleep : and forest-lawn,
Cliffs, woods and caves, her viewless steps resound
And babble of her pastime !—On, dread Power !
With such invisible motion speed thy flight, IO
Through hanging clouds, from craggy height to
 height,
Through the green vales and through the herds-
 man's bower—
That all the Alps may gladden in thy might,
Here, there, and in all places at one hour.

FEELINGS OF THE TYROLESE

THE Land we from our fathers had in trust,
And to our children will transmit, or die ;
This is our maxim, this our piety ;
And God and Nature say that it is just.
That which we *would* perform in arms—we must !
We read the dictate in the infant's eye ;
In the wife's smile ; and in the placid sky ;
And, at our feet, amid the silent dust
Of them that were before us.—Sing aloud
Old songs, the precious music of the heart ! IO

Give, herds and flocks, your voices to the wind !
 While we go forth, a self-devoted crowd,
 With weapons grasped in fearless hands, to assert
 Our virtue, and to vindicate mankind.

O'ER the wide earth, on mountain and on plain,
 Dwells in the affections and the soul of man
 A Godhead, like the universal PAN ;
 But more exalted, with a brighter train :
 And shall his bounty be dispensed in vain,
 Showered equally on city and on field,
 And neither hope nor steadfast promise yield
 In these usurping times of fear and pain ?
 Such doom awaits us. Nay, forbid it Heaven !
 We know the arduous strife, the eternal laws 10
 To which the triumph of all good is given,
 High sacrifice, and labour without pause,
 Even to the death :—else wherefore should the eye
 Of man converse with immortality ?

INDIGNATION OF A HIGH-MINDED SPANIARD

1810

WE can endure that He should waste our lands,
 Despoil our temples, and by sword and flame
 Return us to the dust from which we came ;
 Such food a Tyrant's appetite demands ;
 And we can brook the thought that by his hands
 Spain may be overpowered, and he possess,
 For his delight, a solemn wilderness
 Where all the brave lie dead. But, when of bands
 Which he will break for us he dares to speak,
 Of benefits, and of a future day 10
 When our enlightened minds shall bless his sway ;
 Then, the strained heart of fortitude proves weak ;
 Our groans, our blushes, our pale cheeks declare
 That he has power to inflict what we lack strength
 to bear.

1811

THE power of Armies is a visible thing,
Formal, and circumscribed in time and space ;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave People into light can bring
Or hide, at will,—for freedom combating
By just revenge inflamed ? No foot may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power; that spirit, whether on the wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
Within its awful caves.—From year to year 10
Springs this indigenious produce far and near ;
No craft this subtle element can bind,
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

HERE pause: the poet claims at least this praise,
That virtuous Liberty hath been the scope
Of his pure song, which did not shrink from hope
In the worst moment of these evil days ;
From hope, the paramount *duty* that Heaven lays,
For its own honour, on man's suffering heart.
Never may from our souls one truth depart—
That an accursed thing it is to gaze
On prosperous tyrants with a dazzled eye ;
Nor—touched with due abhorrence of *their* guilt 10
For whose dire ends tears flow, and blood is spilt,
And justice labours in extremity —
Forget thy weakness, upon which is built,
O wretched man, the throne of tyranny :

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT, 1820

INCIDENT AT BRUGÈS

IN Brugès town is many a street
Whence busy life hath fled ;
Where, without hurry, noiseless feet
The grass-grown pavement tread.
There heard we, halting in the shade
Flung from a Convent-tower,
A harp that tuneful prelude made
To a voice of thrilling power.

The measure, simple truth to tell,
Was fit for some gay throng ; 10
Though from the same grim turret fell
The shadow and the song.
When silent were both voice and chords,
The strain seemed doubly dear,
Yet sad as sweet,—for *English* words
Had fallen upon the ear.

It was a breezy hour of eve ;
And pinnacle and spire
Quivered and seemed almost to heave,
Clothed with innocuous fire ; 20
But, where we stood, the setting sun
Showed little of his state ;
And, if the glory reached the Nun,
'Twas through an iron gate.

Not always is the heart unwise,
Nor pity idly born,
If even a passing Stranger sighs
For them who do not mourn
Sad is thy doom, self-solaced dove,
Captive, whoe'er thou be !
Oh ! what is beauty, what is love,
And opening life to thee ?

30

Such feeling pressed upon my soul,
A feeling sanctified
By one soft trickling tear that stole
From the Maiden at my side ;
Less tribute could she pay than this,
Borne gaily o'er the sea,
Fresh from the beauty and the bliss
Of English liberty ?

40

BETWEEN NAMUR AND LIEGE

WHAT lovelier home could gentle Fancy choose ?
Is this the stream, whose cities, heights, and plains,
War's favourite playground, are with crimson stains
Familiar, as the Morn with pearly dew ?
The Morn, that now, along the silver MEUSE,
Spreading her peaceful ensigns, calls the swains
To tend their silent boats and ringing wains,
Or strip the bough whose mellow fruit bestrews
The ripening corn beneath it. As mine eyes
Turn from the fortified and threatening hill,
How sweet the prospect of yon watery glade,
With its grey rocks clustering in pensive shade—
That, shaped like old monastic turrets, rise
From the smooth meadow-ground, serene and still !

10

COMPOSED IN ONE OF THE CATHOLIC
CANTONS

DOOMED as we are our native dust
 To wet with many a bitter shower,
 It ill befits us to disdain
 The altar, to deride the fane,
 Where simple Sufferers bend, in trust
 To win a happier hour.

I love, where spreads the village lawn,
 Upon some knee-worn cell to gaze :
 Hail to the firm unmoving cross,
 Aloft, where pines their branches toss ! 10
 And to the chapel far withdrawn,
 That lurks by lonely ways !

Where'er we roam—along the brink
 Of Rhine—or by the sweeping Po,
 Through Alpine vale, or champaign wide,
 Whate'er we look on, at our side
 Be Charity !—to bid us think,
 And feel, if we would know. 18

ECHO, UPON THE GEMMI

WHAT beast of chase hath broken from the cover ?
 Stern GEMMI listens to as full a cry,
 As multitudinous a harmony
 Of sounds as rang the heights of Latmos over,
 When, from the soft couch of her sleeping Lover,
 Up-starting, Cynthia skimmed the mountain-dew
 In keen pursuit—and gave, where'er she flew,
 Impetuous motion to the Stars above her.
 A solitary Wolf-dog, ranging on
 Through the bleak concave, wakes this wondrous
 chime 10

Of aery voices locked in unison,—
Faint — far-off — near — deep — solemn and sub-
lime !—
So, from the body of one guilty deed,
A thousand ghostly fears, and haunting thoughts.
proceed !

SKY-PROSPECT

FROM THE PLAIN OF FRANCE.

Lo ! in the burning west, the craggy nape
Of a proud Ararat ! and, thereupon,
The Ark, her melancholy voyage done !
Yon rampant cloud mimics a lion's shape ;
There, combats a huge crocodile—agape
A golden spear to swallow ! and that brown
And massy grove, so near yon blazing town,
Stirs and recedes—destruction to escape !
Yet all is harmless—as the Elysian shades
Where Spirits dwell in undisturbed repose— 10
Silently disappears, or quickly fades :
Meek Nature's evening comment on the shows
That for oblivion take their daily birth
From all the fuming vanities of Earth !

MEMORIALS OF A TOUR IN ITALY

1837

THE PINE OF MONTE MARIO AT ROME

I SAW far off the dark top of a Pine
Look like a cloud—a slender stem the tie
That bound it to its native earth—poised high
'Mid evening hues, along the horizon line,
Striving in peace each other to outshine.
But when I learned the Tree was living there,
Saved from the sordid axe by Beaumont's care,
Oh, what a gush of tenderness was mine !
The rescued Pine-tree, with its sky so bright 9
And cloud-like beauty, rich in thoughts of home,
Death-parted friends, and days too swift in flight,
Supplanted the whole majesty of Rome
(Then first apparent from the Pincian Height)
Crowned with St. Peter's everlasting Dome.

AT ROME

THEY—who have seen the noble Roman's scorn
Break forth at thought of laying down his head,
When the blank day is over, garreted
In his ancestral palace, where, from morn
To night, the desecrated floors are worn
By feet of purse-proud strangers ; they—who have
read
In one meek smile, beneath a peasant's shed,
How patiently the weight of wrong is borne ;

They—who have heard some learned Patriot treat
 Of freedom, with mind grasping the whole theme 10
 From ancient Rome, downwards through that bright
 dream
 Of Commonwealths, each city a starlike seat
 Of rival glory ; they—fallen Italy—
 Nor must, nor will, nor can, despair of Thee !

THE CUCKOO AT LAVERNA

MAY 25, 1837.

LIST—'twas the Cuckoo.—O with what delight
 Heard I that voice ! and catch it now, though
 faint,
 Far off and faint, and melting into air,
 Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again !
 Those louder cries give notice that the Bird,
 Although invisible as Echo's self,
 Is wheeling hitherward. Thanks, happy Creature,
 For this unthought-of greeting !

While allured

From vale to hill, from hill to vale led on,
 We have pursued, through various lands, a long 10
 And pleasant course ; flower after flower has blown,
 Embellishing the ground that gave them birth
 With aspects novel to my sight ; but still
 Most fair, most welcome, when they drank the dew
 In a sweet fellowship with kinds beloved,
 For old remembrance sake. And oft—where Spring
 Displayed her richest blossoms among files
 Of orange-trees bedecked with glowing fruit
 Ripe for the hand, or under a thick shade
 Of Ilex, or, if better suited to the hour, 20
 The lightsome Olive's twinkling canopy—
 Oft have I heard the Nightingale and Thrush
 Blending as in a common English grove
 Their love-songs ; but, where'er my feet might roam,

Whate'er assemblages of new and old,
 Strange and familiar, might beguile the way,
 A gratulation from that vagrant Voice
 Was wanting ;—and most happily till now.

For see, Laverna ! mark the far-famed Pile,
 High on the brink of that precipitous rock, 30
 Implanted like a Fortress, as in truth
 It is, a Christian Fortress, garrisoned
 In faith and hope, and dutiful obedience,
 By a few Monks, a stern society,
 Dead to the world and scorning earth-born joys.
 Nay—though the hopes that drew, the fears that
 drove,
 St. Francis, far from Man's resort, to abide
 Among these sterile heights of Apennine,
 Bound him, nor, since he raised yon House, have
 ceased
 To bind his spiritual Progeny, with rules 40
 Stringent as flesh can tolerate and live ;
 His milder Genius (thanks to the good God
 That made us) over those severe restraints
 Of mind, that dread heart-freezing discipline,
 Doth sometimes here predominate, and works
 By unsought means for gracious purposes ;
 For earth through heaven, for heaven, by changeful
 earth,
 Illustrated, and mutually endeared.

Rapt though He were above the power of sense,
 Familiarly, yet out of the cleansed heart 50
 Of that once sinful Being overflowed
 On sun, moon, stars, the nether elements,
 And every shape of creature they sustain,
 Divine affections ; and with beast and bird
 (Stilled from afar—such marvel story tells—
 By casual outbreak of his passionate words,
 And from their own pursuits in field or grove
 Drawn to his side by look or act of love
 Humane, and virtue of his innocent life)

He wont to hold companionship so free, 60
So pure, so fraught with knowledge and delight
As to be likened in his Followers' minds
To that which our first Parents, ere the fall
From their high state darkened the Earth with fear,
Held with all Kinds in Eden's blissful bowers.

Then question not that, 'mid the austere Band,
Who breathe the air he breathed, tread where he
trod,
Some true Partakers of his loving spirit
Do still survive, and, with those gentle hearts
Consorted, Others, in the power, the faith 70
Of a baptized imagination, prompt
To catch from Nature's humblest monitors
Whate'er they bring of impulses sublime.

Thus sensitive must be the Monk, though pale
With fasts, with vigils worn, depressed by years,
Whom in a sunny glade I chanced to see,
Upon a pine-tree's storm-uprooted trunk,
Seated alone, with forehead sky-ward raised,
Hands clasped above the crucifix he wore
Appended to his bosom, and lips closed 80
By the joint pressure of his musing mood
And habit of his vow. That ancient Man—
Nor haply less the Brother whom I marked,
As we approached the Convent gate, aloft
Looking far forth from his aerial cell,
A young Ascetic—Poet, Hero, Sage,
He might have been, Lover belike he was—
If they received into a conscious ear
The notes whose first faint greeting startled me,
Whose sedulous iteration thrilled with joy 90
My heart—may have been moved like me to think,
Ah ! not like me who walk in the world's ways,
On the great Prophet, styled *the Voice of One*
Crying amid the wilderness, and given,
Now that their snows must melt, their herbs and
flowers

Revive, their obstinate winter pass away,
 That awful name to Thee, thee, simple Cuckoo,
 Wandering in solitude, and evermore
 Foretelling and proclaiming, ere thou leave
 This thy last haunt beneath Italian skies 100
 To carry thy glad tidings over heights
 Still loftier, and to climes more near the Pole.

Voice of the Desert, fare-thee-well ; sweet Bird !
 If that substantial title please thee more,
 Farewell !—but go thy way, no need hast thou
 Of a good wish sent after thee ; from bower
 To bower as green, from sky to sky as clear,
 Thee gentle breezes waft—or airs that meet
 Thy course and sport around thee softly fan—
 Till Night, descending upon hill and vale, 110
 Grants to thy mission a brief term of silence,
 And folds thy pinions up in blest repose.

COMPOSED AT RYDAL ON MAY MORNING, 1838

If with old love of you, dear Hills ! I share
 New love of many a rival image brought
 From far, forgive the wanderings of my thought :
 Nor art thou wronged, sweet May ! when I compare
 Thy present birth-morn with thy last, so fair,
 So rich to me in favours. For my lot
 Then was, within the famed Egerian Grot
 To sit and muse, fanned by its dewy air
 Mingling with thy soft breath ! That morning too,
 Warblers I heard their joy unbosoming 10
 Amid the sunny, shadowy Colosseum ;
 Heard them, unchecked by aught of saddening hue,
 For victories there won by flower-crowned Spring,
 Chant in full choir their innocent Te Deum.

THE PILLAR OF TRAJAN

WHERE towers are crushed, and unforbidden weeds
 O'er mutilated arches shed their seeds ;
 And temples, doomed to milder change, unfold
 A new magnificence that vies with old ;
 Firm in its pristine majesty hath stood
 A votive Column, spared by fire and flood :—
 And, though the passions of man's fretful race
 Have never ceased to eddy round its base,
 Not injured more by touch of meddling hands
 Than a lone obelisk, 'mid Nubian sands, 10
 Or aught in Syrian deserts left to save
 From death the memory of the good and brave.
 Historic figures round the shaft embost
 Ascend, with lineaments in air not lost :
 Still as he turns, the charmed spectator sees
 Group winding after group with dreamlike ease ;
 Triumphs in sun-bright gratitude displayed,
 Or softly stealing into modest shade.
 —So, pleased with purple clusters to entwine
 Some lofty elm-tree, mounts the daring vine ; 20
 The woodbine so, with spiral grace, and breathes
 Wide-spreading odours from her flowery wreaths.

Borne by the Muse from rills in shepherds' ears
 Murmuring but one smooth story for all years,
 I gladly commune with the mind and heart
 Of him who thus survives by classic art,
 His actions witness, venerate his mien,
 And study Trajan as by Pliny seen ;
 Behold how fought the Chief whose conquering
 sword
 Stretched far as earth might own a single lord ;
 In the delight of moral prudence schooled, 31
 How feelingly at home the Sovereign ruled ;
 Best of the good—in pagan faith allied
 To more than Man, by virtue deified.

Memorial Pillar ! 'mid the wrecks of Time
 Preserve thy charge with confidence sublime—
 The exultations, pomps, and cares of Rome,
 Whence half the breathing world received its doom ;
 Things that recoil from language ; that, if shown
 By apter pencil, from the light had flown. 40
 A Pontiff, Trajan *here* the Gods implores,
There greets an Embassy from Indian shores ;
 Lo ! he harangues his cohorts—*there* the storm
 Of battle meets him in authentic form !
 Unharnessed, naked, troops of Moorish horse
 Sweep to the charge ; more high, the Dacian force,
 To hoof and finger mailed ;—yet, high or low,
 None bleed, and none lie prostrate but the foe ;
 In every Roman, through all turns of fate,
 Is Roman dignity inviolate ; 50
 Spirit in him pre-eminent, who guides,
 Supports, adorns, and over all presides ;
 Distinguished only by inherent state
 From honoured Instruments that round him wait ;
 Rise as he may, his grandeur scorns the test
 Of outward symbol, nor will deign to rest
 On aught by which another is deprest.
 —Alas ! that One thus disciplined could toil
 To enslave whole nations on their native soil ;
 So emulous of Macedonian fame, 60
 That, when his age was measured with his aim,
 He drooped, 'mid else unclouded victories,
 And turned his eagles back with deep-rawn sighs :
 O weakness of the Great ! O folly of the Wise !

Where now the haughty Empire that was spread
 With such fond hope ? her very speech is dead ;
 Yet glorious Art the power of Time defies,
 And Trajan still, through various ente prise,
 Mounts, in this fine illusion, toward the skies :
 Still are we present with the imperial Chief, 70
 Nor cease to gaze upon the bold Relief
 Till Rome, to silent marble unconfined,
 Becomes with all her years a vision of the Mind.

FROM "THE RIVER DUDDON A SERIES OF SONNETS"

The River Duddon rises upon Wrynose Fell, on the confines of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire; and, having served as a boundary to the two last Counties for the space of about twenty-five miles, enters the Irish Sea, between the Isle of Walney and the Lordship of Millum.

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH

(WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON, AND
OTHER POEMS).

THE Minstrels played their Christmas tune
To-night beneath my cottage-eaves ;
While, smitten by a lofty moon,
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze
Had sunk to rest with folded wings :
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,
Nor check, the music of the strings ;
So stout and hardy were the band
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand !

10

And who but listened ?—till was paid
Respect to every Inmate's claim :
The greeting given, the music played,
In honour of each household name,
Duly pronounced with lusty call,
And "Merry Christmas" wished to all !

O Brother ! I revere the choice
That took thee from thy native hills ; 20
And it is given thee to rejoice :
Though public care full often tills
(Heaven only witness of the toil)
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that Thou, with me and mine,
Hadst heard this never-failing rite ;
And seen on other faces shine
A true revival of the light
Which Nature and these rustic Powers,
In simple childhood, spread through ours ! 30

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait
On these expected annual rounds ;
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,
Or they are offered at the door
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
To hear—and sink again to sleep !
Or, at an earlier call, to mark, 40
By blazing fire, the still suspense
Of self-complacent innocence ;

The mutual nod,—the grave disguise
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er ;
And some unbidden tears that rise
For names once heard, and heard no more ;
Tears brightened by the serenade
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah ! not for emerald fields alone,
With ambient streams more pure and bright 50
Than fabled Cythera's zone
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,
Is to my heart of hearts endeared
The ground where we were born and reared !

Hail, ancient Manners ! sure defence,
 Where they survive, of wholesome laws ;
 Remnants of love whose modest sense
 Thus into narrow room withdraws ;
 Hail, Usages of pristine mould,
 And ye that guard them, Mountains old ! 60

Bear with me, Brother ! quench the thought
 That slights this passion, or condemns ;
 If thee fond Fancy ever brought
 From the proud margin of the Thames,
 And Lambeth's venerable towers,
 To humbler streams, and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,
 Short leisure even in busiest days ;
 Moments, to cast a look behind,
 And profit by those kindly rays 70
 That through the clouds do sometimes steal,
 And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din
 Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,
 A pleased attention I may win
 To agitations less severe,
 That neither overwhelm nor cloy,
 But fill the hollow vale with joy ! 78

DUDDON

CHILD of the clouds ! remote from every taint
 Of sordid industry thy lot is cast ;
 Thine are the honours of the lofty waste ;
 Not seldom, when with heat the valleys faint,
 Thy handmaid Frost with spangled tissue quaint
 Thy cradle decks ;—to chant thy birth, thou hast
 No meaner Poet than the whistling Blast,
 And Desolation is thy Patron-saint !
 She guards thee, ruthless Power ! who would not
 spare
 Those mighty forests, once the bison's screen, 10

Where stalked the huge deer to his shaggy lair
 Through paths and alleys roofed with darkest
 green ;
 Thousands of years before the silent air
 Was pierced by whizzing shaft of hunter keen !

TAKE, cradled Nursling of the mountain, take
 This parting glance, no negligent adieu !
 A Protean change seems wrought while I pursue
 The curves, a loosely-scattered chain doth make ;
 Or rather thou appear'st a glistening snake,
 Silent, and to the gazer's eye untrue,
 Thridding with sinuous lapse the rushes, through
 Dwarf willows gliding, and by ferny brake.
 Starts from a dizzy steep the undaunted Rill
 Robed instantly in garb of snow-white foam ; 10
 And laughing dares the Adventurer, who hath
 clomb
 So high, a rival purpose to fulfil ;
 Else let the dastard backward wend, and roam,
 Seeking less bold achievement, where he will !

SOLE listener, Duddon ! to the breeze that played
 With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful sound
 Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy mound—
 Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid
 The sun in heaven !—but now, to form a shade
 For Thee, green alders have together wound
 Their foliage ; ashes flung their arms around ;
 And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.
 And thou hast also tempted here to rise,
 'Mid sheltering pines, this Cottage rude and grey ;
 Whose ruddy children, by the mother's eyes 11
 Carelessly watched, sport through the summer day,
 Thy pleased associates :—light as endless May
 On infant bosoms lonely Nature lies.

FLOWERS

ERE yet our course was graced with social trees
 It lacked not old remains of hawthorn bowers,
 Where small birds warbled to their paramours ;
 And, earlier still, was heard the hum of bees ;
 I saw them ply their harmless robberies,
 And caught the fragrance which the sundry flowers,
 Fed by the stream with soft perpetual showers,
 Pientiously yielded to the vagrant breeze.
 There bloomed the strawberry of the wilderness ;
 The trembling eyebright showed her sapphire blue,
 The thyme her purple, like the blush of Even ; 11
 And if the breath of some to no caress
 Invited, forth they peeped so fair to view,
 All kinds alike seemed favourites of Heaven.

THE STEPPING-STONES

THE struggling Rill insensibly is grown
 Into a Brook of loud and stately march,
 Crossed ever and anon by plank or arch ;
 And, for like use, lo ! what might seem a zone
 Chosen for ornament—stone matched with stone
 In studied symmetry, with interspace
 For the clear waters to pursue their race
 Without restraint. How swiftly have they flown,
 Succeeding—still succeeding ! Here the Child
 Puts, when the high-swoln Flood runs fierce and wild,
 His budding courage to the proof ; and here 11
 Declining Manhood learns to note the sly
 And sure encroachments of infirmity,
 Thinking how fast time runs, life's end how near !

O MOUNTAIN Stream ! the Shepherd and his Cot
 Are privileged Inmates of deep solitude ;
 Nor would the nicest Anchorite exclude
 A field or two of brighter green, or plot

Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
 Of stationary sunshine :—thou hast viewed
 These only, Duddon ! with their paths renewed
 By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.
 Thee hath some awful Spirit impelled to leave,
 Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,
 Though simple thy companions were and few ;
 And through this wilderness a passage cleave
 Attended but by thy own voice, save when
 The clouds and fowls of the air thy way pursue !

10

SEATHWAITE CHAPEL

SACRED Religion ! “ mother of form and fear,”
 Dread arbitress of mutable respect,
 New rites ordaining when the old are wrecked,
 Or cease to please the fickle worshipper ;
 Mother of Love ! (that name best suits thee here)
 Mother of Love ! for this deep vale, protect
 Truth’s holy lamp, pure source of bright effect,
 Gifted to purge the vapoury atmosphere
 That seeks to stifle it ;—as in those days
 When this low Pile a Gospel Teacher knew,
 Whose good works formed an endless retinue :
 A Pastor such as Chaucer’s verse portrays ;
 Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew ;
 And tender Goldsmith crowned with deathless praise !

10

TRIBUTARY STREAM

My frame hath often trembled with delight
 When hope presented some far-distant good,
 That seemed from heaven descending, like the flood
 Of yon pure waters, from their aery height
 Hurrying, with lordly Duddon to unite ;
 Who, ’mid a world of images imprest
 On the calm depth of his transparent breast,
 Appears to cherish most that Torrent white,

The fairest, softest, liveliest of them all !
 And seldom hath ear listened to a tune 10
 More lulling than the busy hum of Noon,
 Swoln by that voice—whose murmur musical
 Announces to the thirsty fields a boon
 Dewy and fresh, till showers again shall fall.

THE PLAIN OF DONNERDALE

THE old inventive Poets, had they seen,
 Or rather felt, the entrancement that detains
 Thy waters, Duddon ! 'mid these flowery plains ;
 The still repose, the liquid lapse serene,
 Transferred to bowers imperishably green,
 Had beautified Elysium ! But these chains
 Will soon be broken ;—a rough course remains,
 Rough as the past ; where Thou, of placid mien,
 Innocuous as a firstling of the flock,
 And countenanced like a soft cerulean sky, 10
 Shalt change thy temper ; and, with many a shock
 Given and received in mutual jeopardy,
 Dance, like a Bacchanal, from rock to rock,
 Tossing her frantic thyrsus wide and high !

RETURN, Content ! for fondly I pursued,
 Even when a child, the Streams—unheard, unseen ;
 Through tangled woods, impending rocks between ;
 Or, free as air, with flying inquest viewed
 The sullen reservoirs whence their bold brood—
 Pure as the morning, fretful, boisterous, keen,
 Green as the salt-sea billows, white and green—
 Poured down the hills, a choral multitude !
 Nor have I tracked their course for scanty gains ;
 They taught me random cares and truant joys, 10
 That shield from mischief and preserve from stains
 Vague minds, while men are growing out of boys ;
 Maturer Fancy owes to their rough noise
 Impetuous thoughts that brook not servile reins.

JOURNEY RENEWED

I ROSE while yet the cattle, heat-opprest,
 Crowded together under rustling trees
 Brushed by the current of the water-breeze ;
 And for *their* sakes, and love of all that rest,
 On Duddon's margin, in the sheltering nest ;
 For all the startled scaly tribes that slink
 Into his coverts, and each fearless link
 Of dancing insects forged upon his breast ;
 For these, and hopes and recollections worn
 Close to the vital seat of human clay ;
 Glad meetings, tender partings, that upstay
 The drooping mind of absence, by vows sworn
 In his pure presence near the trysting thorn--
 I thanked the Leader of my onward way.

NOT hurled precipitous from steep to steep ;
 Lingering no more 'mid flower-enamelled lands
 And blooming thickets ; nor by rocky bands
 Held ; but in radiant progress toward the Deep
 Where mightiest rivers into powerless sleep
 Sink, and forget their nature—*now* expands
 Majestic Duddon, over smooth flat sands
 Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep !
 Beneath an ampler sky a region wide
 Is opened round him :—hamlets, towers, and
 towns,
 And blue-topped hills, behold him from afar ;
 In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied
 Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs,
 With commerce freighted, or triumphant war.

CONCLUSION

BUT here no cannon thunders to the gale ;
 Upon the wave no haughty pendants cast
 A crimson splendour : lowly is the mast
 That rises here, and humbly spread, the sail ;

While, less disturbed than in the narrow Vale
 Through which with strange vicissitudes he
 passed,
 The Wanderer seeks that receptacle vast
 Where all his unambitious functions fail.
 And may thy Poet, cloud-born Stream ! be free—
 The sweets of earth contentedly resigned, 10
 And each tumultuous working left behind
 At seemly distance—to advance like Thee ;
 Prepared, in peace of heart, in calm of mind
 And soul, to mingle with Eternity !

AFTER-THOUGHT

*I THOUGHT of Thee, my partner and my guide,
 As being past away.—Vain sympathies !
 For, backward, Duddon ! as I cast my eyes,
 I see what was, and is, and will abide ;
 Still glides the Stream, and shall for ever glide ;
 The Form remains, the Function never dies ;
 While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
 We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
 The elements, must vanish ;—be it so !
 Enough, if something from our hands have power
 To live, and act, and serve the future hour ; 11
 And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
 Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent
 dower,
 We feel that we are greater than we know.*

YARROW REVISITED, AND OTHER POEMS

The following Stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott and other friends visiting the Banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford for Naples.

The title "Yarrow Revisited" will stand in no need of explanation for Readers acquainted with the Author's previous poems suggested by that celebrated Stream (see pages 309, 319).

THE gallant Youth, who may have gained,
Or seeks, a "winsome Marrow,"
Was but an Infant in the lap
When first I looked on Yarrow ;
Once more, by Newark's Castle-gate
Long left without a warder,
I stood, looked, listened, and with Thee,
Great Minstrel of the Border !

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,
Their dignity installing 10
In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves
Were on the bough, or falling ;
But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed—
The forest to embolden ;
Reddened the fiery hues, and shot
Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the Stream flowed on
In foamy agitation ;
And slept in many a crystal pool
For quiet contemplation :

No public and no private care
The freeborn mind enthralling,
We made a day of happy hours,
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk Youth appeared, the Morn of Youth,
With freaks of graceful folly,—
Life's temperate Noon, her sober Eve,
Her Night not melancholy ;
Past, present, future, all appeared
In harmony united,
Like guests that meet, and some from far,
By cordial love invited.

30

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods
And down the meadow ranging,
Did meet us with unaltered face,
Though we were changed and changing ;
If, *then*, some natural shadows spread
Our inward prospect over,
The soul's deep valley was not slow
Its brightness to recover.

40

Eternal blessings on the Muse,
And her divine employment !
The blameless Muse, who trains her Sons
For hope and calm enjoyment ;
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,
Has o'er their pillow brooded ;
And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT ! compelled to change
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes ;
And leave thy Tweed and Tiviot
For mild Sorento's breezy waves ;
May classic Fancy, linking
With native Fancy her fresh aid,
Preserve thy heart from sinking !

50

Oh ! while they minister to thee,
 Each vying with the other,
 May Health return to mellow Age,
 With Strength, her venturous brother ; 60
 And Tiber, and each brook and rill
 Renowned in song and story,
 With unimagined beauty shine,
 Nor lose one ray of glory !

For Thou, upon a hundred streams,
 By tales of love and sorrow,
 Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
 Hast shed the power of Yarrow ;
 And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
 Wherever they invite Thee, 70
 At parent Nature's grateful call,
 With gladness must requite Thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,
 Such looks of love and honour
 As thy own Yarrow gave to me
 When first I gazed upon her ;
 Beheld what I had feared to see,
 Unwilling to surrender
 Dreams treasured up from early days,
 The holy and the tender. 80

And what, for this frail world, were all
 That mortals do or suffer,
 Did no responsive harp, no pen,
 Memorial tribute offer ?
 Yea, what were mighty Nature's self ?
 Her features, could they win us,
 Unhelped by the poetic voice
 That hourly speaks within us ?

Nor deem that localised Romance
 Plays false with our affections ;
 Unsanctifies our tears—made sport
 For fanciful dejections : 90

Ah, no ! the visions of the past
 Sustain the heart in feeling
 Life as she is—our changeful Life,
 With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness, Ye, whose thoughts that day
 In Yarrow's groves were centred ;
 Who through the silent portal arch
 Of mouldering Newark entered ; 100
 And clomb the winding stair that once
 Too timidly was mounted
 By the "last Minstrel," (not the last !)
 Ere he his Tale recounted.

Flow on for ever, Yarrow Stream !
 Fulfil thy pensive duty,
 Well pleased that future Bards should chant
 For simple hearts thy beauty ;
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
 Dear to the common sunshine, 110
 And dearer still, as now I feel,
 To memory's shadowy moonshine !

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT FROM ABBOTSFORD, FOR NAPLES

A TROUBLE, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
 Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
 Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height :
 Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain
 For kindred Power departing from their sight ;
 While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe
 strain,
 Sadde is his voice again, and yet again.
 Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners ! for the might
 Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes ;
 Blessings and prayers in nobler retinue 10
 Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows.

Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
 Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
 Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope !

THE TROSACHS

THERE'S not a nook within this solemn Pass
 But were an apt confessional for One
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,
 That Life is but a tale of morning grass
 Withered at eve. From scenes of art which chase
 That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than
 glass
 Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice happy
 quest,
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray 10
 (October's workmanship to rival May)
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest !

THE pibroch's note, discountenanced or mute ;
 The Roman kilt, degraded to a toy
 Of quaint apparel for a half-spoilt boy ;
 The target mouldering like ungathered fruit ;
 The smoking steam-boat eager in pursuit,
 As eagerly pursued ; the umbrella spread
 To weather-fend the Celtic herdsman's head—
 All speak of manners withering to the root,
 And of old honours, too, and passions high :
 Then may we ask, though pleased that thought
 should range 10
 Among the conquests of civility,
 Survives imagination—to the change
 Superior ? Help to virtue does she give ?
 If not, O Mortals, better cease to live !

EAGLES

COMPOSED AT DUNOLLIE CASTLE IN THE BAY OF OBAN.

DISHONOURED Rock and Ruin ! that, by law
 Tyrannic, keep the Bird of Jove embarred
 Like a lone criminal whose life is spared.
 Vexed is he, and screams loud. The last I saw
 Was on the wing ; stooping, he struck with awe
 Man, bird, and beast ; then, with a consort paired,
 From a bold headland, their loved aery's guard,
 Flew high above Atlantic waves, to draw
 Light from the fountain of the setting sun.
 Such was this Prisoner once ; and when his plumes
 The sea-blast ruffles as the storm comes on, I I
 Then, for a moment, he, in spirit, resumes
 His rank 'mong freeborn creatures that live free,
 His power, his beauty, and his majesty.

HIGHLAND HUT

SEE what gay wild flowers deck this earth-built Cot,
 Whose smoke, forth-issuing whence and how it may,
 Shines in the greeting of the sun's first ray
 Like wreaths of vapour without stain or blot.
 The limpid mountain-rill avoids it not ;
 And why shouldst thou ?—If rightly trained and
 bred,
 Humanity is humble, finds no spot
 Which her Heaven-guided feet refuse to tread.
 The walls are cracked, sunk is the flowery roof,
 Undressed the pathway leading to the door ; IO
 But love, as Nature loves, the lonely Poor ;
 Search, for their worth, some gentle heart wrong-
 proof,
 Meek, patient, kind, and, were its trials fewer,
 Belike less happy.—Stand no more aloof !

TO THE PLANET VENUS, AN EVENING STAR

COMPOSED AT LOCH LOMOND.

THOUGH joy attend Thee orient at the birth
 Of dawn, it cheers the lofty spirit most
 To watch thy course when Daylight, fled from earth,
 In the grey sky hath left his lingering Ghost,
 Perplexed as if between a splendour lost
 And splendour slowly mustering. Since the Sun,
 The absolute, the world-absorbing One,
 Relinquished half his empire to the host
 Emboldened by thy guidance, holy Star,
 Holy as princely, who that looks on thee 10
 Touching, as now, in thy humility
 The mountain-borders of this seat of care,
 Can question that thy countenance is bright,
 Celestial Power, as much with love as light ?

BOTHWELL CASTLE

(PASSED UNSEEN, ON ACCOUNT OF STORMY WEATHER).

IMMURED in Bothwell's towers, at times the Brave
 (So beautiful is Clyde) forgot to mourn
 The liberty they lost at Bannockburn.
 Once on those steeps *I* roamed at large, and have
 In mind the landscape, as if still in sight;
 The river glides, the woods before me wave;
 Then why repine that now in vain I crave
 Needless renewal of an old delight ?
 Better to thank a dear and long-past day
 For joy its sunny hours were free to give 10
 Than blame the present, that our wish hath crost.
 Memory, like sleep, hath powers which dreams obey,
 Dreams, vivid dreams, that are not fugitive;
 How little that she cherishes is lost !

DEDICATION OF THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE

IN trellised shed with clustering roses gay,
And, MARY ! oft beside our blazing fire,
When years of wedded life were as a day
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,
Did we together read in Spenser's Lay
How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,
The gentle Una, of celestial birth,
To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the
earth.

Ah, then, Belovèd ! pleasing was the smart,
And the tear precious in compassion shed 10
For Her, who, pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited ;
Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart
The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led,—
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,
Like the brave Lion slain in her defence.

Notes could we hear as of a faery shell
Attuned to words with sacred wisdom fraught ;
Free Fancy prized each specious miracle,
And all its finer inspiration caught ; 20
Till in the bosom of our rustic Cell
We by a lamentable change were taught
That “ bliss with mortal Man may not abide :”
How nearly joy and sorrow are allied !

For us the stream of fiction ceased to flow,
 For us the voice of melody was mute.
 —But, as soft gales dissolve the dreary snow,
 And give the timid herbage leave to shoot,
 Heaven's breathing influence failed not to bestow
 A timely promise of unlooked-for fruit, 30
 Fair fruit of pleasure and serene content
 From blossoms wild of fancies innocent.

It soothed us—it beguiled us—then, to hear
 Once more of troubles wrought by magic spell ;
 And griefs whose aery motion comes not near
 The pangs that tempt the Spirit to rebel :
 Then, with mild Una in her sober cheer,
 High over hill and low adown the dell
 Again we wandered, willing to partake
 All that she suffered for her dear Lord's sake. 40

Then, too, this Song of *mine* once more could please,
 Where anguish, strange as dreams of restless sleep,
 Is tempered and allayed by sympathies
 Aloft ascending, and descending deep,
 Even to the inferior Kinds ; whom forest-trees
 Protect from beating sunbeams, and the sweep
 Of the sharp winds ;—fair Creatures !—to whom
 Heaven
 A calm and sinless life, with love, hath given.

This tragic Story cheered us ; for it speaks
 Of female patience winning firm repose ; 50
 And, of the recompense that conscience seeks,
 A bright, encouraging, example shows ;
 Needful when o'er wide realms the tempest breaks,
 Needful amid life's ordinary woes ;—
 Hence not for them unfitted who would bless
 A happy hour with holier happiness.

He serves the Muses erringly and ill,
 Whose aim is pleasure light and fugitive :
 O, that my mind were equal to fulfil 59
 The comprehensive mandate which they give—

Vain aspiration of an earnest will !
Yet in this moral Strain a power may live,
Belovèd Wife ? such solace to impart
As it hath yielded to thy tender heart.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,
April 20, 1815.

“ ACTION is transitory—a step, a blow,
The motion of a muscle—this way or that—
'Tis done ; and in the after-vacancy
We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed :
Suffering is permanent, obscure and dark,
And has the nature of infinity.
Yet through that darkness (infinite though it seem
And irremoveable) gracious openings lie,
By which the soul—with patient steps of thought
Now toiling, wafted now on wings of prayer— 10
May pass in hope, and, though from mortal bonds
Yet undelivered, rise with sure ascent
Even to the fountain-head of peace divine.”

FROM “THE WHITE DOE OF RYLSTONE”

FAST the churchyard fills ;—anon
Look again, and they all are gone ;
The cluster round the porch, and the folk
Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak !
And scarcely have they disappeared
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard :—
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice !
They sing a service which they feel :
For 'tis the sunrise now of zeal ;
Of a pure faith the vernal prime—
In great Eliza's golden time.

40

A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without and within ;

For though the priest, more tranquilly,
 Recites the holy liturgy,
 The only voice which you can hear
 Is the river murmuring near.
 —When soft !—the dusky trees between,
 And down the path through the open green,
 Where is no living thing to be seen ; 51
 And through yon gateway, where is found,
 Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
 Free entrance to the churchyard ground—
 Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
 Comes gliding in serene and slow,
 Soft and silent as a dream,
 A solitary Doe !
 White she is as lily of June,
 And beauteous as the silver moon 60
 When out of sight the clouds are driven
 And she is left alone in heaven ;
 Or like a ship some gentle day
 In sunshine sailing far away.
 A glittering ship, that hath the plain
 Of ocean for her own domain.

Lie silent in your graves, ye dead !
 Lie quiet in your churchyard bed !
 Ye living, tend your holy cares ;
 Ye multitude, pursue your prayers ; 70
 And blame not me if my heart and sight
 Are occupied with one delight !
 'Tis a work for sabbath hours
 If I with this bright Creature go :
 Whether she be of forest bowers,
 From the bowers of earth below ;
 Or a Spirit for one day given,
 A pledge of grace from purest heaven.

What harmonious pensive changes
 Wait upon her as she ranges 80
 Round and through this Pile of state
 Overthrown and desolate !

Now a step or two her way
 Leads through space of open day,
 Where the enamoured sunny light
 Brightens her that was so bright ;
 Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
 Falls upon her like a breath,
 From some lofty arch or wall,
 As she passes underneath : 90
 Now some gloomy nook partakes
 Of the glory that she makes,—
 High-ribbed vault of stone, or cell,
 With perfect cunning framed as well
 Of stone, and ivy, and the spread
 Of the elder's bushy head ;
 Some jealous and forbidding cell,
 That doth the living stars repel,
 And where no flower hath leave to dwell. 99

* * * * *

But chiefly by that single grave,
 That one sequestered hillock green,
 The pensive visitant is seen. 1900
 There doth the gentle Creature lie
 With those adversities unmoved ;
 Calm spectacle, by earth and sky
 In their benignity approved !
 And aye, methinks, this hoary Pile,
 Subdued by outrage and decay,
 Looks down upon her with a smile,
 A gracious smile, that seems to say—
 "Thou, thou art not a Child of Time,
 But Daughter of the Eternal Prime !" 1910

ECCLESIASTICAL SONNETS

A SELECTION

THE VIRGIN

MOTHER ! whose virgin bosom was uncrost
With the least shade of thought to sin allied ;
Woman ! above all women glorified,
Our tainted nature's solitary boast ;
Purer than foam on central ocean tost ;
Brighter than eastern skies at daybreak strewn
With fancied roses, than the unblemished moon
Before her wane begins on heaven's blue coast ;
Thy Image falls to earth. Yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend, 10
As to a visible Power, in which did blend
All that was mixed and reconciled in Thee
Of mother's love with maiden purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene !

WALTON'S BOOK OF LIVES

THERE are no colours in the fairest sky
So fair as these. The feather, whence the pen
Was shaped that traced the lives of these good men,
Dropped from an Angel's wing. With moistened
eye
We read of faith and purest charity
In Statesman, Priest, and humble Citizen :
Oh could we copy their mild virtues, then
What joy to live, what blessedness to die !
Methinks their very names shine still and bright ;
Apart—like glow-worms on a summer night ; 10

Or lonely tapers when from far they fling
 A guiding ray ; or seen—like stars on high,
 Satellites burning in a lucid ring
 Around meek Walton's heavenly memory.

PLACES OF WORSHIP

As star that shines dependent upon star
 Is to the sky while we look up in love ;
 As to the deep fair ships which though they move
 Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from afar ;
 As to the sandy desert fountains are,
 With palm-groves shaded at wide intervals,
 Whose fruit around the sun-burnt Native falls
 Of roving tired or desultory war—
 Such to this British Isle her Christian Fanes,
 Each linked to each for kindred services ; 10
 Her Spires, her Steeple-towers with glittering vanes
 Far-kenned, her Chapels lurking among trees,
 Where a few villagers on bended knees
 Find solace which a busy world disdains.

MUTABILITY

FROM low to high doth dissolution climb,
 And sink from high to low, along a scale
 Of awful notes, whose concord shall not fail ;
 A musical but melancholy chime,
 Which they can hear who meddle not with crime,
 Nor avarice, nor over-anxious care.
 Truth fails not ; but her outward forms that bear
 The longest date do melt like frosty rime,
 That in the morning whitened hill and plain
 And is no more ; drop like the tower sublime 10
 Of yesterday, which royally did wear
 His crown of weeds, but could not even sustain
 Some casual shout that broke the silent air,
 Or the unimaginable touch of Time.

EMIGRANT FRENCH CLERGY

EVEN while I speak, the sacred roofs of France
 Are shattered into dust; and self-exiled
 From altars threatened, levelled, or defiled,
 Wander the Ministers of God, as chance
 Opens a way for life, or consonance
 Of faith invites. More welcome to no land
 The fugitives than to the British strand,
 Where priest and layman with the vigilance
 Of true compassion greet them. Creed and test
 Vanish before the unreserved embrace 10
 Of catholic humanity:—distrest
 They came,—and, while the moral tempest roars
 Throughout the Country they have left, our shores
 Give to their Faith a fearless resting-place.

 INSIDE OF KING'S COLLEGE CHAPEL,
 CAMBRIDGE

TAX not the royal Saint with vain expense,
 With ill-matched aims the Architect who planned—
 Albeit labouring for a scanty band
 Of white-robed Scholars only—this immense
 And glorious Work of fine intelligence!
 Give all thou canst; high Heaven rejects the lore
 Of nicely-calculated less or more;
 So deemed the man who fashioned for the sense
 These lofty pillars, spread that branching roof
 Self-poised, and scooped into ten thousand cells, 10
 Where light and shade repose, where music dwells
 Lingering—and wandering on as loth to die;
 Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
 That they were born for immortality.

THE SAME

WHAT awful perspective ! while from our sight
With gradual stealth the lateral windows hide
Their Portraits, their stone-work glimmers, dyed
In the soft chequerings of a sleepy light.
Martyr, or King, or sainted Eremite,
Whoe'er ye be, that thus, yourselves unseen,
Imbue your prison-bars with solemn sheen,
Shine on, until ye fade with coming Night !—
But, from the arms of silence—list ! O list !
The music bursteth into second life ;
The notes luxuriate, every stone is kissed
By sound, or ghost of sound, in mazy strife ;
Heart-thrilling strains, that cast, before the eye
Of the devout, a veil of ecstasy !

10

CONTINUED

THEY dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here ;
Or through the aisles of Westminster to roam ;
Where bubbles burst, and folly's dancing foam
Melts, if it cross the threshold ; where the wreath
Of awe-struck wisdom droops : or let my path
Lead to that younger Pile, whose sky-like dome
Hath typified by reach of daring art
Infinity's embrace ; whose guardian crest,
The silent Cross, among the stars shall spread
As now, when She hath also seen her breast
Filled with mementos, satiate with its part
Of grateful England's overflowing Dead.

10

EVENING VOLUNTARIES

A SELECTION

I.

CALM is the fragrant air, and loth to lose
Day's grateful warmth, tho' moist with falling dew.
Look for the stars, you'll say that there are none ;
Look up a second time, and, one by one,
You mark them twinkling out with silvery light,
And wonder how they could elude the sight !
The birds, of late so noisy in their bowers,
Warbled a while with faint and fainter powers,
But now are silent as the dim-seen flowers :
Nor does the village Church-clock's iron tone 10
The time's and season's influence disown ;
Nine beats distinctly to each other bound
In drowsy sequence—how unlike the sound
That, in rough winter, oft inflicts a fear
On fireside listeners, doubting what they hear !
The shepherd, bent on rising with the sun,
Had closed his door before the day was done,
And now with thankful heart to bed doth creep,
And joins his little children in their sleep.
The bat, lured forth where trees the lane o'ershade,
Flits and reflits along the close arcade ; 21
The busy dor-hawk chases the white moth
With burring note, which Industry and Sloth
Might both be pleased with, for it suits them both.
A stream is heard—I see it not, but know
By its soft music whence the waters flow :
Wheels and the tread of hoofs are heard no more ;
One boat there was, but it will touch the shore
With the next dipping of its slackened oar ;

Faint sound, that, for the gayest of the gay, 30
Might give to serious thought a moment's sway,
As a last token of man's toilsome day !

II.

ON A HIGH PART OF THE COAST OF
CUMBERLAND

Easter Sunday, April 7.

THE AUTHOR'S SIXTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY:

THE Sun, that seemed so mildly to retire,
Flung back from distant climes a streaming fire,
Whose blaze is now subdued to tender gleams,
Prelude of night's approach with soothing dreams.
Look round ;—of all the clouds not one is moving ;
'Tis the still hour of thinking, feeling, loving.
Silent, and steadfast as the vaulted sky,
The boundless plain of waters seems to lie :—
Comes that low sound from breezes rustling o'er
The grass-crowned headland that conceals the
shore ? 10
No ; 'tis the earth-voice of the mighty sea,
Whispering how meek and gentle he *can* be !

Thou Power supreme ! who, arming to rebuke
Offenders, dost put off the gracious look,
And clothe thyself with terrors like the flood
Of Ocean roused into his fiercest mood,
Whatever discipline thy Will ordain
For the brief course that must for me remain ;
Teach me with quick-eared spirit to rejoice
In admonitions of thy softest voice ! 20
Whate'er the path these mortal feet may trace,
Breathe through my soul the blessing of thy grace.
Glad, through a perfect love, a faith sincere
Drawn from the wisdom that begins with fear,
Glad to expand ; and, for a season, free
From finite cares, to rest absorbed in Thee !

III.

BY THE SEASIDE

THE sun is couched, the sea-fowl gone to rest,
 And the wild storm hath somewhere found a nest ;
 Air slumbers—wave with wave no longer strives,
 Only a heaving of the deep survives,
 A tell-tale motion ! soon will it be laid,
 And by the tide alone the water swayed.
 Stealthy withdrawals, interminglings mild
 Of light with shade in beauty reconciled—
 Such is the prospect far as sight can range,
 The soothing recompense, the welcome change. 10
 Where now the ships that drove before the blast,
 Threatened by angry breakers as they passed ;
 And by a train of flying clouds bemocked ;
 Or, in the hollow surge, at anchor rocked
 As on a bed of death ? Some lodge in peace,
 Saved by His care who bade the tempest cease ;
 And some, too heedless of past danger, court
 Fresh gales to waft them to the far-off port ;
 But near, or hanging sea and sky between,
 Not one of all those wingèd powers is seen, 20
 Seen in her course, nor 'mid this quiet heard ;
 Yet oh ! how gladly would the air be stirred
 By some acknowledgement of thanks and praise,
 Soft in its temper as those vesper lays
 Sung to the Virgin while accordant oars
 Urge the slow bark along Calabrian shores ;
 A sea-born service through the mountains felt
 Till into one loved vision all things melt :
 Or like those hymns that soothe with graver
 sound
 The gulfy coast of Norway iron-bound ; 30
 And, from the wide and open Baltic, rise
 With punctual care, Lutheran harmonies.
 Hush, not a voice is here ! but why repine,
 Now when the star of eve comes forth to shine
 On British waters with that look benign ?

Ye mariners, that plough your onward way,
Or in the haven rest, or sheltering bay,
May silent thanks at least to God be given
With a full heart; "our thoughts are *heard* in
heaven!"

IV.

Not in the lucid intervals of life
That come but as a curse to party-strife ;
Not in some hour when Pleasure with a sigh
Of languor puts his rosy garland by ;
Not in the breathing-times of that poor slave
Who daily piles up wealth in Mammon's cave-
Is Nature felt, or can be ; nor do words,
Which practised talent readily affords,
Prove that her hand has touched responsive chords ;
Nor has her gentle beauty power to move IO
With genuine rapture and with fervent love
The soul of Genius, if he dare to take
Life's rule from passion craved for passion's sake ;
Untaught that meekness is the cherished bent
Of all the truly great and all the innocent.

But who is innocent ? By grace divine,
Not otherwise, O Nature ! we are thine,
Through good and evil thine, in just degree
Of rational and manly sympathy.
To all that Earth from pensive hearts is stealing,
And Heaven is now to gladdened eyes revealing, 21
Add every charm the Universe can show
Through every change its aspects undergo—
Care may be respited, but not repealed ;
No perfect cure grows on that bounded field.
Vain is the pleasure, a false calm the peace,
If He, through whom alone our conflicts cease,
Our virtuous hopes without relapse advance,
Come not to speed the Soul's deliverance ;
To the distempered Intellect refuse 30
His gracious help, or give what we abuse.

V.

BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE

THE linnet's warble, sinking towards a close,
 Hints to the thrush 'tis time for their repose ;
 The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and again
 The monitor revives his own sweet strain ;
 But both will soon be mastered, and the copse
 Be left as silent as the mountain-tops,
 Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest
 The throng of rooks, that now, from twig or nest,
 (After a steady flight on home-bound wings,
 And a last game of mazy hoverings 10
 Around their ancient grove) with cawing noise
 Disturb the liquid music's equipoise.

O Nightingale ! Who ever heard thy song
 Might here be moved, till Fancy grows so strong
 That listening sense is pardonably cheated
 Where wood or stream by thee was never greeted.
 Surely, from fairest spots of favoured lands,
 Were not some gifts withheld by jealous hands,
 This hour of deepening darkness here would be
 As a fresh morning for new harmony ; 20
 And lays as prompt would hail the dawn of Night :
 A *dawn* she has both beautiful and bright,
 When the East kindles with the full moon's light ;
 Not like the rising sun's impatient glow
 Dazzling the mountains, but an overflow
 Of solemn splendour, in mutation slow.

Wanderer by spring with gradual progress led,
 For sway profoundly felt as widely spread ;
 To king, to peasant, to rough sailor, dear,
 And to the soldier's trumpet-wearied ear ; 30
 How welcome wouldst thou be to this green Vale
 Fairer than Tempe ! Yet, sweet Nightingale !
 From the warm breeze that bears thee on, alight
 At will, and stay thy migratory flight ;
 Build, at thy choice, or sing, by pool or fount,

Who shall complain, or call thee to account ?
 The wisest, happiest, of our kind are they
 That ever walk content with Nature's way,
 God's goodness—measuring bounty as it may ;
 For whom the gravest thought of what they miss,
 Chastening the fulness of a present bliss, 41
 Is with that wholesome office satisfied,
 While unrepining sadness is allied
 In thankful bosoms to a modest pride.

VI.

SOFT as a cloud is yon blue Ridge—the Mere
 Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless, clear,
 And motionless ; and, to the gazer's eye,
 Deeper than ocean, in the immensity
 Of its vague mountains and unreal sky !
 But, from the process in that still retreat,
 Turn to minuter changes at our feet ;
 Observe how dewy Twilight has withdrawn
 The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,
 And has restored to view its tender green, 10
 That, while the sun rode high, was lost beneath
 their dazzling sheen.

—An emblem this of what the sober Hour
 Can do for minds disposed to feel its power !
 Thus oft, when we in vain have wished away
 The petty pleasures of the garish day,
 Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping host
 (Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his post)
 And leaves the disencumbered spirit free
 To reassume a staid simplicity.

'Tis well—but what are helps of time and place,
 When wisdom stands in need of nature's grace ; 21
 Why do good thoughts, invoked or not, descend,
 Like Angels from their bowers, our virtues to
 befriend ;

If yet To-morrow, unbelied, may say,
 " I come to open out, for fresh display,
 The elastic vanities of yesterday ? "

VII.

THE leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill,
 And sky that danced among those leaves, are still ;
 Rest smooths the way for sleep ; in field and bower
 Soft shades and dews have shed their blended power
 On drooping eyelid and the closing flower ;
 Sound is there none at which the faintest heart
 Might leap, the weakest nerve of superstition start ;
 Save when the Owlet's unexpected scream
 Pierces the ethereal vault ; and ('mid the gleam
 Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream, 10
 From the hushed vale's realities, transferred
 To the still lake) the imaginative Bird
 Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not unheard.

Grave Creature !—whether, while the moon shines
 bright

On thy wings opened wide for smoothest flight,
 Thou art discovered in a roofless tower,
 Rising from what may once have been a lady's bower ;
 Or spied where thou sitt'st moping in thy mew
 At the dim centre of a churchyard yew ;
 Or from a rifted crag or ivy tod 20
 Deep in a forest, thy secure abode,
 Thou giv'st, for pastime's sake, by shriek or shout,
 A puzzling notice of thy whereabouts—
 May the night never come, nor day be seen,
 When I shall scorn thy voice or mock thy mien !

In classic ages men perceived a soul
 Of sapience in thy aspect, headless Owl !
 Thee Athens revered in the studious grove ;
 And near the golden sceptre grasped by Jove,
 His Eagle's favourite perch, while round him sate
 The Gods revolving the decrees of Fate, 31
 Thou, too, wert present at Minerva's side :—
 Hark to that second larum !—far and wide
 The elements have heard, and rock and cave
 replied.

VIII.

THE sun has long been set,
The stars are out by twos and threes,
The little birds are piping yet
Among the bushes and trees ;
There's a cuckoo, and one or two thrushes,
And a far-off wind that rushes,
And a sound of water that gushes,
And the cuckoo's sovereign cry
Fills all the hollow of the sky.
Who would go "parading" 10
In London, "and masquerading,"
On such a night of June
With that beautiful soft half-moon,
And all these innocent blisses ?
On such a night as this is !

IX.

COMPOSED UPON AN EVENING OF EXTRA-
ORDINARY SPLENDOUR AND BEAUTY

I.

HAD this effulgence disappeared
With flying haste, I might have sent,
Among the speechless clouds, a look
Of blank astonishment ;
But 'tis endued with power to stay,
And sanctify one closing day,
That frail Mortality may see—
What is ?—ah no, but what *can* be !
Time was when field and watery cove
With modulated echoes rang, 10
While choirs of fervent Angels sang
Their vespers in the grove ;
Or, crowning, star-like, each some sovereign
height,
Warbled, for heaven above and earth below,
Strains suitable to both.—Such holy rite,
Methinks, if audibly repeated now

From hill or valley, could not move
 Sublimar transport, purer love,
 Than doth this silent spectacle—the gleam—
 The shadow—and the peace supreme ! 20

II.

No sound is uttered,—but a deep
 And solemn harmony pervades
 The hollow vale from steep to steep,
 And penetrates the glades.
 Far-distant images draw nigh,
 Called forth by wondrous potency
 Of beamy radiance, that imbues
 Whate'er it strikes with gem-like hues !
 In vision exquisitely clear,
 Herds range along the mountain side ; 30
 And glistening antlers are descried ;
 And gilded flocks appear.
 Thine is the tranquil hour, purpleal Eve !
 But long as god-like wish, or hope divine,
 Informs my spirit, ne'er can I believe
 That this magnificence is wholly thine !
 —From worlds not quickened by the sun
 A portion of the gift is won ;
 An intermingling of Heaven's pomp is spread
 On ground which British shepherds tread ! 40

III.

And if there be whom broken ties
 Afflict, or injuries assail,
 Yon hazy ridges to their eyes
 Present a glorious scale,
 Climbing suffused with sunny air,
 To stop—no record hath told where !
 And tempting Fancy to ascend,
 And with immortal Spirits blend !

—Wings at my shoulders seem to play ;
 But, rooted here, I stand and gaze 50
 On those bright steps that heavenward raise
 Their practicable way.
 Come forth, ye drooping old men, look abroad,
 And see to what fair countries ye are bound !
 And if some traveller, weary of his road,
 Hath slept since noon-tide on the grassy ground,
 Ye Genii ! to his covert speed ;
 And wake him with such gentle heed
 As may attune his soul to meet the dower
 Bestowed on this transcendent hour ! 60

IV.

Such hues from their celestial Urn
 Were wont to stream before mine eye,
 Where'er it wandered in the morn
 Of blissful infancy.
 This glimpse of glory, why renewed ?
 Nay, rather speak with gratitude ;
 For, if a vestige of those gleams
 Survived, 'twas only in my dreams.
 Dread Power ! whom peace and calmness serve
 No less than Nature's threatening voice, 70
 If aught unworthy be my choice,
 From THEE if I would swerve ;
 Oh, let Thy grace remind me of the light
 Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored ;
 Which, at this moment, on my waking sight
 Appears to shine, by miracle restored ;
 My soul, though yet confined to earth,
 Rejoices in a second birth !
 —'Tis past, the visionary splendour fades ;
 And night approaches with her shades. 80

Note.—The multiplication of mountain-ridges, described at the commencement of the third Stanza of this Ode as a kind of Jacob's Ladder, leading to Heaven, is produced either by watery vapours, or sunny haze ;—in the present instance by the latter cause. Allusions to the Ode entitled " Intimations of Immortality " pervade the last Stanza of the foregoing Poem.

XI.

THE Crescent-moon, the Star of Love,
 Glories of evening, as ye there are seen
 With but a span of sky between—
 Speak one of you, my doubts remove,
 Which is the attendant Page and which the Queen?

XII.

TO THE MOON

COMPOSED BY THE SEASIDE,—ON THE COAST OF
 CUMBERLAND.

WANDERER! that stoop'st so low, and com'st so
 near

To human life's unsettled atmosphere ;
 Who lov'st with Night and Silence to partake,
 So might it seem, the cares of them that wake ;
 And, through the cottage-lattice softly peeping,
 Dost shield from harm the humblest of the sleeping ;
 What pleasure once encompassed those sweet names
 Which yet in thy behalf the Poet claims,
 An idolizing dreamer as of yore !—
 I slight them all ; and, on this sea-beat shore 10
 Sole-sitting, only can to thoughts attend
 That bid me hail thee as the SAILOR'S FRIEND ;
 So call thee for heaven's grace through thee made
 known

By confidence supplied and mercy shown,
 When not a twinkling star or beacon's light
 Abates the perils of a stormy night ;
 And for less obvious benefits, that find
 Their way, with thy pure help, to heart and mind ;
 Both for the adventurer starting in life's prime ;
 And veteran ranging round from clime to clime, 20
 Long-baffled hope's slow fever in his veins,
 And wounds and weakness oft his labour's sole
 remains.

The aspiring Mountains and the winding
Streams,

Empress of Night ! are gladdened by thy beams ;
A look of thine the wilderness pervades,
And penetrates the forest's inmost shades ;
Thou, chequering peaceably the minster's gloom,
Guid'st the pale Mourner to the lost one's tomb ;
Canst reach the Prisoner—to his grated cell
Welcome, though silent and intangible !— 30
And lives there one, of all that come and go
On the great waters toiling to and fro,
One, who has watched thee at some quiet hour
Enthroned aloft in undisputed power,
Or crossed by vapoury streaks and clouds that
move
Catching the lustre they in part reprove—
Nor sometimes felt a fitness in thy sway
To call up thoughts that shun the glare of day,
And make the serious happier than the gay ?

Yes, lovely Moon ! if thou so mildly bright 40
Dost rouse, yet surely in thy own despite,
To fiercer mood the frenzy-stricken brain,
Let me a compensating faith maintain ;
That there's a sensitive, a tender, part
Which thou canst touch in every human heart,
For healing and composure.—But as least
And mightiest billows ever have confessed
Thy domination ; as the whole vast Sea
Feels through her lowest depths thy sovereignty ;
So shines that countenance with especial grace 50
On them who urge the keel her *plains* to trace
Furrowing its way right onward. The most rude,
Cut off from home and country, may have stood—
Even till long gazing hath bedimmed his eye,
Or the mute rapture ended in a sigh—
Touched by accordance of thy placid cheer,
With some internal lights to memory dear,
Or fancies stealing forth to soothe the breast
Tired with its daily share of earth's unrest,—

Gentle awakenings, visitations meek ; 60
A kindly influence whereof few will speak,
Though it can wet with tears the hardiest cheek.

And when thy beauty in the shadowy cave
Is hidden, buried in its monthly grave ;
Then, while the Sailor, 'mid an open sea
Swept by a favouring wind that leaves thought free,
Paces the deck—no star perhaps in sight,
And nothing save the moving ship's own light
To cheer the long dark hours of vacant night—
Oft with his musings does thy image blend, 70
In his mind's eye thy crescent horns ascend,
And thou art still, O Moon, that SAILOR'S FRIEND !

XV.

WHO but is pleased to watch the moon on high
Travelling where she from time to time enshrouds
Her head, and nothing loth her Majesty
Renounces, till among the scattered clouds
One with its kindling edge declares that soon
Will reappear before the uplifted eye
A Form as bright, as beautiful a moon,
To glide in open prospect through clear sky.
Pity that such a promise e'er should prove 10
False in the issue, that yon seeming space
Of sky should be in truth the steadfast face
Of a cloud flat and dense, through which must move
(By transit not unlike man's frequent doom)
The Wanderer lost in more determined gloom.

ITINERARY POEMS OF 1833

ADIEU, Rydalian Laurels ! that have grown
And spread as if ye knew that days might come
When ye would shelter in a happy home,
On this fair Mount, a Poet of your own,
One who ne'er ventured for a Delphic crown
To sue the God ; but, haunting your green shade
All seasons through, is humbly pleased to braid
Ground-flowers, beneath your guardianship, self-
sown.

Farewell ! no Minstrels now with harp new-strung
For summer wandering quit their household
bowers ;

10

Yet not for this wants Poesy a tongue
To cheer the Itinerant on whom she pours
Her spirit, while he crosses lonely moors,
Or musing sits forsaken halls among.

TO THE RIVER DERWENT

AMONG the mountains were we nursed, loved
Stream !

Thou near the eagle's nest—within brief sail,
I, of his bold wing floating on the gale,
Where thy deep voice could lull me ! Faint the
beam

Of human life when first allowed to gleam
On mortal notice.—Glory of the vale,
Such thy meek outset, with a crown, though frail,
Kept in perpetual verdure by the steam
Of thy soft breath !—Less vivid wreath entwined

Nemæan victor's brow ; less bright was worn, 10
 Meed of some Roman chief—in triumph borne
 With captives chained ; and shedding from his car
 The sunset splendours of a finished war
 Upon the proud enslavers of mankind !

IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH

(WHERE THE AUTHOR WAS BORN AND HIS FATHER'S
 REMAINS ARE LAID).

A POINT of life between my Parent's dust,
 And yours, my buried Little-ones ! am I ;
 And to those graves looking habitually
 In kindred quiet I repose my trust.
 Death to the innocent is more than just,
 And, to the sinner, mercifully bent ;
 So may I hope, if truly I repent
 And meekly bear the ills which bear I must :
 And You, my Offspring ! that do still remain,
 Yet may outstrip me in the appointed race, 10
 If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual pain
 We breathed together for a moment's space,
 The wrong, by love provoked, let love arraign,
 And only love keep in your hearts a place.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

LANDING AT THE MOUTH OF THE DERWENT,
 WORKINGTON.

DEAR to the Loves, and to the Graces vowed,
 The Queen drew back the wimple that she wore ;
 And to the throng, that on the Cumbrian shore
 Her landing hailed, how touchingly she bowed !
 And like a Star (that, from a heavy cloud
 Of pine-tree foliage poised in air, forth darts,
 When a soft summer gale at evening parts
 The gloom that did its loveliness enshroud)
 She smiled ; but Time, the old Saturnian seer,

Sighed on the wing as her foot pressed the strand,
With step prelude to a long array 11
Of woes and degradations hand in hand—
Weeping captivity, and shuddering fear
Still by the ensanguined block of Fotheringay !

AT SEA OFF THE ISLE OF MAN

BOLD words affirmed, in days when faith was strong
And doubts and scruples seldom teased the brain,
That no adventurer's bark had power to gain
These shores if he approached them bent on wrong ;
For, suddenly up-conjured from the Main,
Mists rose to hide the Land—that search, though long
And eager, might be still pursued in vain.
O Fancy, what an age was *that* for song !
That age, when not by *laws* inanimate,
As men believed, the waters were impelled, 10
The air controlled, the stars their courses held ;
But element and orb on *acts* did wait
Of *Powers* endued with visible form, instinct
With will, and to their work by passion linked.

DESIRE we past illusions to recall ?
To reinstate wild Fancy, would we hide
Truths whose thick veil Science has drawn aside ?
No,—let this Age, high as she may, instal
In her esteem the thirst that wrought man's fall,
The universe is infinitely wide ;
And conquering Reason, if self-glorified,
Can nowhere move uncrossed by some new wall
Or gulf of mystery, which thou alone,
Imaginative Faith ! canst overleap, 10
In progress toward the fount of Love,—the throne
Of Power whose ministers the records keep
Of periods fixed, and laws established, less
Flesh to exalt than prove its nothingness.

WRITTEN IN A BLANK LEAF OF
MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN

OFT have I caught, upon a fitful breeze,
 Fragments of far-off melodies,
 With ear not coveting the whole,
 A part so charmed the pensive soul :
 While a dark storm before my sight
 Was yielding, on a mountain height
 Loose vapours have I watched, that won
 Prismatic colours from the sun ;
 Nor felt a wish that heaven would show
 The image of its perfect bow. 10
 What need, then, of these finished Strains ?
 Away with counterfeit Remains !
 An abbey in its lone recess,
 A temple of the wilderness,
 Wrecks though they be, announce with feeling
 The majesty of honest dealing.
 Spirit of Ossian ! if imbound
 In language thou may'st yet be found,
 If aught (intrusted to the pen
 Or floating on the tongues of men, 20
 Albeit shattered and impaired)
 Subsist thy dignity to guard,
 In concert with memorial claim
 Of old grey stone, and high-born name
 That cleaves to rock or pillared cave
 Where moans the blast, or beats the wave,
 Let Truth, stern arbitress of all,
 Interpret that Original,
 And for presumptuous wrongs atone ;—
 Authentic words be given, or none ! 30

Time is not blind ;—yet He, who spares
 Pyramid pointing to the stars,
 Hath preyed with ruthless appetite
 On all that marked the primal flight
 Of the poetic ecstasy
 Into the land of mystery.

No tongue is able to rehearse
 One measure, Orpheus ! of thy verse ;
 Musæus, stationed with his lyre
 Supreme among the Elysian quire, 40
 Is, for the dwellers upon earth,
 Mute as a lark ere morning's birth.
 Why grieve for these, though past away
 The music, and extinct the lay ?
 When thousands, by severer doom,
 Full early to the silent tomb
 Have sunk, at Nature's call ; or strayed
 From hope and promise, self-betrayed ;
 The garland withering on their brows ;
 Stung with remorse for broken vows ; 50
 Frantic—else how might they rejoice ?
 And friendless, by their own sad choice !

Hail, Bards of mightier grasp ! on you
 I chiefly call, the chosen Few,
 Who cast not off the acknowledged guide,
 Who faltered not, nor turned aside ;
 Whose lofty genius could survive
 Privation, under sorrow thrive ;
 In whom the fiery Muse revered
 The symbol of a snow-white beard, 60
 Bedewed with meditative tears
 Dropped from the lenient cloud of years.

Brothers in soul ! though distant times
 Produced you nursed in various climes,
 Ye, when the orb of life had waned,
 A plenitude of love retained ;
 Hence, while in you each sad regret
 By corresponding hope was met,
 Ye lingered among human kind,
 Sweet voices for the passing wind ; 70
 Departing sunbeams, loth to stop,
 Though smiling on the last hill-top !

Such to the tender-hearted maid
 Even ere her joys begin to fade ;
 Such, haply, to the rugged chief
 By fortune crushed, or tamed by grief ;
 Appears, on Morven's lonely shore,
 Dim-gleaming through imperfect lore,
 The Son of Fingal ; such was blind
 Maeonides of ampler mind ;
 Such Milton, to the fountain-head
 Of glory by Urania led !

80

CAVE OF STAFFA

We saw, but surely, in the motley crowd,
 Not One of us has felt the far-famed sight ;
 How *could* we feel it ? each the other's blight,
 Hurried and hurrying, volatile and loud.
 O for those motions only that invite
 The Ghost of Fingal to his tuneful Cave
 By the breeze entered, and wave after wave
 Softly embosoming the timid light !
 And by *one* Votary who at will might stand
 Gazing and take into his mind and heart,
 With undistracted reverence, the effect
 Of those proportions where the almighty hand
 That made the worlds, the sovereign Architect,
 Has deigned to work as if with human Art !

10

CAVE OF STAFFA

AFTER THE CROWD HAD DEPARTED.

THANKS for the lessons of this Spot—fit school
 For the presumptuous thoughts that would assign
 Mechanic laws to agency divine ;
 And, measuring heaven by earth, would overrule
 Infinite Power. The pillared vestibule,
 Expanding yet precise, the roof embowed,
 Might seem designed to humble man, when proud
 Of his best workmanship by plan and tool.

Down-bearing with his whole Atlantic weight
 Of tide and tempest on the Structure's base, 10
 And flashing to that Structure's topmost height,
 Ocean has proved its strength, and of its grace
 In calms is conscious, finding for his freight
 Of softest music some responsive place.

"THERE!" said a Stripling, pointing with meet pride
 Towards a low roof with green trees half concealed,
 "Is Mosgiel Farm; and that's the very field
 Where Burns ploughed up the Daisy." Far and wide
 A plain below stretched seaward, while, descried
 Above sea-clouds, the Peaks of Arran rose;
 And, by that simple notice, the repose
 Of earth, sky, sea, and air, was vivified.
 Beneath "the random *bield* of clod or stone"
 Myriads of daisies have shone forth in flower 10
 Near the lark's nest, and in their natural hour
 Have passed away; less happy than the One
 That, by the unwilling ploughshare, died to prove
 The tender charm of poetry and love.

MOST sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
 While a fair region round the traveller lies
 Which he forbears again to look upon;
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
 The work of Fancy, or some happy tone
 Of meditation, slipping in between
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
 Let us break off all commerce with the Muse: 10
 With Thought and Love companions of our way,
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,
 The Mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

POEMS OF SENTIMENT AND REFLECTION

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY

“WHY, William, on that old grey stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away ?

“Where are your books ?—that light bequeathed
To Beings else forlorn and blind !
Up ! up ! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

“You look round on your Mother Earth,
As if she for no purpose bore you ;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before you !”

10

One morning thus, by Esthwaite lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply :

“The eye—it cannot choose but see ;
We cannot bid the ear be still ;
Our bodies feel, where’er they be,
Against or with our will.

20

“Nor less I deem that there are Powers
Which of themselves our minds impress :
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

“Think you, ’mid all this mighty sum
Of things for ever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking ?

“ —Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old grey stone,
And dream my time away.”

30

THE TABLES TURNED

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Up ! up ! my Friend, and quit your books ;
Or surely you'll grow double :
Up ! up ! my Friend, and clear your looks ;
Why all this toil and trouble ?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books ! 'tis a dull and endless strife :
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music ! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

10

And hark ! how blithe the throstle sings !
He, too, is no mean preacher :
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your Teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

20

One impulse from a vernal wood
 May teach you more of man,
 Of moral evil and of good,
 Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings ;
 Our meddling intellect
 Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things :—
 We murder to dissect.

Enough of Science and of Art ;
 Close up those barren leaves ;
 Come forth, and bring with you a heart
 That watches and receives.

30

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

I HEARD a thousand blended notes,
 While in a grove I sate reclined,
 In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
 Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
 The human soul that through me ran ;
 And much it grieved my heart to think
 What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
 The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;
 And 'tis my faith that every flower
 Enjoys the air it breathes.

10

The birds around me hopped and played,
 Their thoughts I cannot measure :—
 But the least motion which they made,
 It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan.
To catch the breezy air ;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

20

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man ?

TO MY SISTER

It is the first mild day of March :
Each minute sweeter than before,
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign ;
Come forth and feel the sun.

10

Edward will come with you ;—and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar :
We from to-day, my Friend, will date
The opening of the year.

20

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth :
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey :
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

30

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my Sister ! come. I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

40

SIMON LEE

THE OLD HUNTSMAN;

With an incident in which he was concerned.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,
An old Man dwells, a little man,—
'Tis said he once was tall.
Full five-and-thirty years he lived
A running huntsman merry ;
And still the centre of his cheek
Is red as a ripe cherry.

No man like him the horn could sound,
And hill and valley rang with glee
When Echo bandied, round and round,
The halloo of Simon Lee.
In those proud days, he little cared
For husbandry or tillage ;
To blither tasks did Simon rouse
The sleepers of the village.

10

He all the country could outrun,
Could leave both man and horse behind ;
And often, ere the chase was done,
He reeled, and was stone-blind.
And still there's something in the world
At which his heart rejoices ;
For when the chiming hounds are out,
He dearly loves their voices !

20

But, oh the heavy change !—bereft
Of health, strength, friends, and kindred, see !
Old Simon to the world is left
In liveried poverty.
His Master's dead,—and no one now
Dwells in the Hall of Ivor ;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead ;
He is the sole survivor.

30

And he is lean and he is sick ;
His body, dwindled and awry,
Rests upon ankles swoln and thick ;
His legs are thin and dry.
One prop he has, and only one,
His wife, an aged woman,
Lives with him, near the waterfall,
Upon the village Common.

40

Beside their moss-grown hut of clay,
Not twenty paces from the door,
A scrap of land they have, but they
Are poorest of the poor.

This scrap of land he from the heath
Enclosed when he was stronger ;
But what to them avails the land
Which he can till no longer ?

Of, working by her Husband's side,
Ruth does what Simon cannot do ;
For she, with scanty cause for pride,
Is stouter of the two.
And, though you with your utmost skill
From labour could not wean them,
'Tis little, very little—all
That they can do between them.

50

Few months of life has he in store,
As he to you will tell,
For still, the more he works, the more
Do his weak ankles swell.
My gentle Reader, I perceive
How patiently you've waited,
And now I fear that you expect
Some tale will be related.

60

O Reader ! had you in your mind
Such stores as silent thought can bring,
O gentle Reader ! you would find
A tale in everything.
What more I have to say is short,
And you must kindly take it :
It is no tale ; but, should you think,
Perhaps a tale you'll make it.

70

One summer-day I chanced to see
This old Man doing all he could
To unearth the root of an old tree,
A stump of rotten wood.
The mattock tottered in his hand ;
So vain was his endeavour,
That at the root of the old tree
He might have worked for ever.

80

“ You’re overtasked, good Simon Lee,
Give me your tool,” to him I said ;
And at the word right gladly he
Received my proffered aid.
I struck, and with a single blow
The tangled root I severed,
At which the poor old Man so long
And vainly had endeavoured.

The tears into his eyes were brought,
And thanks and praises seemed to run 90
So fast out of his heart, I thought
They never would have done.
—I’ve heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
With coldness still returning ;
Alas ! the gratitude of men
Hath oftener left me mourning.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY

ON ONE OF THE COLDEST DAYS OF THE CENTURY.

The Reader must be apprised that the Stoves in North Germany generally have the impression of a galloping horse upon them, this being part of the Brunswick Arms.

A PLAGUE on your languages, German and Norse !
Let me have the song of the kettle ;
And the tongs and the poker, instead of that
horse
That gallops away with such fury and force
On this dreary dull plate of black metal.

See that Fly,—a disconsolate creature ! perhaps
A child of the field or the grove ;
And, sorrow for him ! the dull treacherous heat
Has seduced the poor fool from his winter retreat,
And he creeps to the edge of my stove. 10

Alas ! how he fumbles about the domains
Which this comfortless oven environ !
He cannot find out in what track he must crawl,
Now back to the tiles, then in search of the wall,
And now on the brink of the iron.

Stock-still there he stands like a traveller bemazed :
The best of his skill he has tried ;
His feelers, methinks, I can see him put forth
To the east and the west, to the south and the north,
But he finds neither guide-post nor guide. 20

His spindles sink under him, foot, leg, and thigh !
His eyesight and hearing are lost ;
Between life and death his blood freezes and thaws ;
And his two pretty pinions of blue dusky gauze
Are glued to his sides by the frost.

No brother, no mate has he near him—while I
Can draw warmth from the cheek of my Love ;
As blest and as glad, in this desolate gloom,
As if green summer grass were the floor of my room,
And woodbines were hanging above. 30

Yet, God is my witness, thou small helpless Thing !
Thy life I would gladly sustain
Till summer come up from the south, and with crowds
Of thy brethren a march thou shouldst sound through
the clouds,
And back to the forests again !

A POET'S EPITAPH

ART thou a Statist in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred ?
—First learn to love one living man ;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou ?—draw not nigh !
Go, carry to some fitter place
The keenness of that practised eye,
The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer ?
A rosy Man, right plump to see ? 10
Approach ; yet, Doctor, not too near,
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,
A Soldier and no man of chaff ?
Welcome !—but lay thy sword aside,
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou ?—one, all eyes,
Philosopher !—a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave ? 20

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
O turn aside,—and take, I pray,
That he below may rest in peace,
Thy ever-dwindling soul, away !

A Moralist perchance appears ;
Led, Heaven knows how ! to this poor sod :
And he has neither eyes nor ears ;
Himself his world, and his own God ;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small ; 30
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
An intellectual All-in-all !

Shut close the door ; press down the latch ;
Sleep in thy intellectual crust ;
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown ?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

40

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noon-day grove ;
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed ;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart,—
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

50

But he is weak ; both Man and Boy,
Hath been an idler in the land ;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength ;
Come, weak as is a breaking wave !
Here stretch thy body at full length ;
Or build thy house upon this grave.

60

TO THE DAISY

BRIGHT Flower ! whose home is everywhere,
Bold in maternal Nature's care,
And all the long year through the heir
Of joy and sorrow ;
Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest thorough !

Is it that Man is soon deprest ?
 A thoughtless Thing ! who, once unblest, 10
 Does little on his memory rest,
 Or on his reason,
 And Thou wouldst teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind,
 A hope for times that are unkind
 And every season ?

Thou wander'st the wide world about,
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,
 With friends to greet thee, or without,
 Yet pleased and willing ; 20
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling.

MATTHEW

In the School of ——— is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the Names of the several persons who have been Schoolmasters there since the foundation of the School, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those Names the Author wrote the following lines.

If Nature, for a favourite child,
 In thee hath tempered so her clay,
 That every hour thy heart runs wild,
 Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines ; and then review
 This tablet, that thus humbly rears
 In such diversity of hue
 Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of fame,
 Cipher and syllable ! thine eye 10
 Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
 Pause with no common sympathy.

And if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed :
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool ;
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

20

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness ;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up—
He felt with spirit so profound.

—Thou soul of God's best earthly mould !
Thou happy Soul ! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee ?

30

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS

WE walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun ;
And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,
“ The will of God be done ! ”

A village schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering grey ;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,
And by the steaming rills, 10
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

“Our work,” said I, “was well begun,
Then from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?”

A second time did Matthew stop ;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply : 20

“Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

“And just above yon slope of corn
Such colours, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

“With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave, 30
And, to the churchyard come, stopped short
Beside my daughter’s grave.

“Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale ;
And then she sang ;—she would have been
A very nightingale.

“Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e’er had loved before. 40

“ And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the churchyard yew,
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

“ A basket on her head she bare ;
Her brow was smooth and white :
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight !

“ No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free ;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

50

“ There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine ;
I looked at her, and looked again :
And did not wish her mine !”

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

60

THE FOUNTAIN

A CONVERSATION.

WE talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat ;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

“ Now, Matthew !” said I, “ let us match
This water’s pleasant tune 10
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer’s noon ;

“ Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made !”

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree ;
And thus the dear old Man replied,
The grey-haired man of glee : 20

“ No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears ;
How merrily it goes !
’Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

“ And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain’s brink.

“ My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred, 30
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

“ Thus fares it still in our decay :
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

“ The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will. 40

“ With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife ; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free :

“ But we are pressed by heavy laws ;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

“ If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own ;
It is the man of mirth.

50

“ My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me ! but by none
Am I enough beloved.”

“ Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains !
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains ;

60

“ And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee !”
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
“ Alas ! that cannot be.”

We rose up from the fountain-side ;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;
And through the wood we went ;

And, ere we came to Leonard's rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

70

PERSONAL TALK

I.

I AM not One who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal talk,—
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight :
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
These all wear out of me, like Forms with chalk
Painted on rich men's floors, for one feast-night.
Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire ; 10
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

II.

"Yet life," you say, "is life ; we have seen and see,
And with a living pleasure we describe ;
And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
The languid mind into activity.
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee
Are fostered by the comment and the gibe." 20
Even be it so : yet still among your tribe,
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not me !
Children are blest, and powerful ; their world lies
More justly balanced ; partly at their feet,
And part far from them :—sweetest melodies
Are those that are by distance made more sweet ;
Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,
He is a Slave ; the meanest we can meet !

III.

Wings have we,—and as far as we can go
We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood, 30
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.

Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we know,
 Are a substantial world, both pure and good :
 Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
 Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
 There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
 Matter wherein right voluble I am,
 To which I listen with a ready ear ;
 Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—
 The gentle Lady married to the Moor ;
 And heavenly Una with her milk-white Lamb.

40

IV.

Nor can I not believe but that hereby
 Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
 From evil-speaking ; rancour, never sought,
 Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous
 thought :
 And thus from day to day my little boat
 Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
 Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
 Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—
 The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
 Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

50

INCIDENT

CHARACTERISTIC OF A FAVOURITE DOG.

ON his morning rounds the Master
 Goes to learn how all things fare ;
 Searches pasture after pasture,
 Sheep and cattle eyes with care ;
 And, for silence or for talk,
 He hath comrades in his walk ;
 Four dogs, each pair of different breed,
 Distinguished two for scent, and two for speed.

See a hare before him started !
—Off they fly in earnest chase ; 10
Every dog is eager-hearted,
All the four are in the race :
And the hare whom they pursue,
Knows from instinct what to do ;
Her hope is near : no turn she makes ;
But, like an arrow, to the river takes.

Deep the river was, and crusted
Thinly by a one night's frost ;
But the nimble Hare hath trusted
To the ice, and safely crost ; 20
She hath crost, and without heed
All are following at full speed,
When, lo ! the ice, so thinly spread,
Breaks—and the greyhound, DART, is overhead !

Better fate have PRINCE and SWALLOW—
See them cleaving to the sport !
MUSIC has no heart to follow,
Little MUSIC, she stops short.
She hath neither wish nor heart,
Hers is now another part : 30
A loving creature she, and brave !
And fondly strives her struggling friend to save.

From the brink her paws she stretches,
Very hands as you would say !
And afflicting moans she fetches,
As he breaks the ice away.
For herself she hath no fears,—
Him alone she sees and hears,—
Makes efforts with complainings ; nor gives o'er
Until her fellow sinks to re-appear no more. 40

TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAME DOG.

LIE here, without a record of thy worth,
 Beneath a covering of the common earth !
 It is not from unwillingness to praise,
 Or want of love, that here no Stone we raise ;
 More thou deserv'st ; but *this* man gives to man,
 Brother to brother, *this* is all we can.
 Yet they to whom thy virtues made thee dear
 Shall find thee through all changes of the year :
 This Oak points out thy grave ; the silent tree
 Will gladly stand a monument of thee.

10

We grieved for thee, and wished thy end were past ;
 And willingly have laid thee here at last :
 For thou hadst lived till every thing that cheers
 In thee had yielded to the weight of years ;
 Extreme old age had wasted thee away,
 And left thee but a glimmering of the day ;
 Thy ears were deaf, and feeble were thy knees,—
 I saw thee stagger in the summer breeze,
 Too weak to stand against its sportive breath,
 And ready for the gentlest stroke of death.

20

It came, and we were glad ; yet tears were shed ;
 Both man and woman wept when thou wert dead ;
 Not only for a thousand thoughts that were,
 Old household thoughts, in which thou hadst thy share ;
 But for some precious boons vouchsafed to thee,
 Found scarcely anywhere in like degree !
 For love, that comes wherever life and sense
 Are given by God, in thee was most intense ;
 A chain of heart, a feeling of the mind,
 A tender sympathy, which did thee bind

30

Not only to us Men, but to thy Kind :
 Yea, for thy fellow-brutes in thee we saw
 A soul of love, love's intellectual law :—
 Hence, if we wept, it was not done in shame ;
 Our tears from passion and from reason came,
 And, therefore, shalt thou be an honoured name !

FIDELITY

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,
A cry as of a dog or fox ;
He halts—and searches with his eyes
Among the scattered rocks :
And now at distance can discern
A stirring in a brake of fern ;
And instantly a dog is seen,
Glancing through that covert green.

The Dog is not of mountain breed ;
Its motions, too, are wild and shy ;
With something, as the Shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry :
Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow or on height ;
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear ;
What is the creature doing here ?

10

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps, till June, December's snow ;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn¹ below !
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway, or cultivated land ;
From trace of human foot or hand.

20

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;
The crags repeat the raven's croak,
In symphony austere ;
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
And mists that spread the flying shroud ;
And sunbeams ; and the sounding blast,
That, if it could, would hurry past ;
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

30

¹ Tarn is a *small* Mere or Lake, mostly high up in the mountains.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
The Shepherd stood ; then makes his way
O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog
As quickly as he may ;
Nor far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground ;
The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
Looks round, to learn the history.

40

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The Man had fallen, that place of fear !
At length upon the Shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear :
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came ;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell !
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This Dog, had been through three months' space
A dweller in that savage place.

50

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
When this ill-fated Traveller died,
The Dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his master's side :
How nourished here through such long time
He knows, who gave that love sublime ;
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate !

60

ODE TO DUTY

" Jam non consilio bonus, sed more eò perductus, ut non tantum rectè facere possim, sed nisi rectè facere non possim."

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God !
 O Duty ! if that name thou love
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove ;
 Thou, who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe ;
 From vain temptations dost set free ;
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
 Be on them ; who, in love and truth, 10
 Where no misgiving is, rely
 Upon the genial sense of youth :
 Glad Hearts ! without reproach or blot ;
 Who do thy work, and know it not :
 Oh ! if through confidence misplaced
 They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power ! around
 them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
 And happy will our nature be,
 When love is an unerring light,
 And joy its own security. 20
 And they a blissful course may hold
 Even now, who, not unwisely bold,
 Live in the spirit of this creed ;
 Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried ;
 No sport of every random gust,
 Yet being to myself a guide,
 Too blindly have reposed my trust :
 And oft, when in my heart was heard
 Thy timely mandate, I deferred 30

The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control ;
But in the quietness of thought :
Me this unchartered freedom tires ;
I feel the weight of chance-desires :
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

40

[Yet not the less would I throughout
Still act according to the voice
Of my own wish ; and feel past doubt
That my submissiveness was choice :
Not seeking in the school of pride
For "precepts over dignified,"
Denial and restraint I prize
No farther than they breed a second Will more wise.¹]

Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face :
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient heavens, through Thee, are
fresh and strong.

50

To humbler functions, awful Power !
I call thee : I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
Oh, let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give ;
And in the light of truth thy Bondman let me live !

60

¹ In ed. 1807 only.

THE HAPPY WARRIOR

WHO is the happy Warrior ? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be ?
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought :
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright :
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn ;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there, 10
But makes his moral being his prime care ;
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,
And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train !
Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower ;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives :
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate ; 20
Is placable—because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice ;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more ; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress ;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
—'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill, 30
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labours good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows :
—Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means ; and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire ;

Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ; 40
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state ;
Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,
Like showers of manna, if they come at all :
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind, 50
Is happy as a Lover ; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired ;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need :
—He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes ; 60
Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart ; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve ;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love :—
'Tis, finally, the Man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—
Plays, in the many games of life, that one 70
Where what he most doth value must be won :
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpast :
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,

Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
 And leave a dead unprofitable name— 80
 Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
 And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
 His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
 This is the happy Warrior ; this is He
 That every Man in arms should wish to be.

THE FORCE OF PRAYER

OR, THE FOUNDING OF BOLTON PRIORY.

A TRADITION.

~~What~~ "What is good for a bootless bene?"
 With these dark words begins my Tale ;
 And their meaning is, whence can comfort spring
 When Prayer is of no avail ?

~~What~~ "What is good for a bootless bene?"
 The Falconer to the Lady said ;
 And she made answer " ENDLESS SORROW !"
 For she knew that her Son was dead.

She knew it by the Falconer's words,
 And from the look of the Falconer's eye ; 10
 And from the love which was in her soul
 For her youthful Romilly.

—Young Romilly through Barden woods
 Is ranging high and low ;
 And holds a greyhound in a leash,
 To let slip upon buck or doe.

The pair have reached that fearful chasm,
 How tempting to bestride !
 For lordly Wharf is there pent in
 With rocks on either side. 20

The striding-place is called THE STRID,
A name which it took of yore :
A thousand years hath it borne that name,
And shall a thousand more.

And hither is young Romilly come,
And what may now forbid
That he, perhaps for the hundredth time,
Shall bound across THE STRID ?

He sprang in glee,—for what cared he
That the river was strong, and the rocks were
steep ?— 30
But the greyhound in the leash hung back,
And checked him in his leap.

The Boy is in the arms of Wharf,
And strangled by a merciless force ;
For never more was young Romilly seen
Till he rose a lifeless corse.

Now there is stillness in the vale,
And long, unspeaking, sorrow :
Wharf shall be to pitying hearts
A name more sad than Yarrow. 40

If for a Lover the Lady wept,
A solace she might borrow
From death, and from the passion of death :—
Old Wharf might heal her sorrow.

She weeps not for the wedding-day
Which was to be to-morrow :
Her hope was a further-looking hope,
And hers is a mother's sorrow

He was a tree that stood alone,
And proudly did its branches wave ; 50
And the root of this delightful tree
Was in her husband's grave !

Long, long in darkness did she sit,
 And her first words were, "Let there be
 In Bolton, on the field of Wharf,
 A stately Priory!"

The stately Priory was reared ;
 And Wharf, as he moved along,
 To matins joined a mournful voice,
 Nor failed at even-song.

60

And the Lady prayed in heaviness
 That looked not for relief !
 But slowly did her succour come,
 And a patience to her grief.

Oh ! there is never sorrow of heart
 That shall lack a timely end,
 If but to God we turn, and ask
 Of Him to be our friend !

ODE TO LYCORIS

MAY, 1817.

I.

AN age hath been when Earth was proud
 Of lustre too intense
 To be sustained ; and Mortals bowed
 The front in self-defence.
 Who *then*, if Dian's crescent gleamed,
 Or Cupid's sparkling arrow streamed
 While on the wing the Urchin played,
 Could fearlessly approach the shade ?
 —Enough for one soft vernal day,
 If I, a bard of ebbing time,
 And nurtured in a fickle clime,
 May haunt this hornèd bay ;
 Whose amorous water multiplies
 The flitting halcyon's vivid dyes ;

10

And smooths her liquid breast—to show
 These swan-like specks of mountain snow,
 White as the pair that slid along the plains
 Of heaven, when Venus held the reins !

II.

In youth we love the darksome lawn
 Brushed by the owlet's wing ; 20
 Then, Twilight is preferred to Dawn,
 And Autumn to the Spring.
 Sad fancies do we then affect,
 In luxury of disrespect
 To our own prodigal excess
 Of too familiar happiness.
 Lycoris (if such name befit
 Thee, thee my life's celestial sign !)
 When Nature marks the year's decline,
 Be ours to welcome it ; 30
 Pleased with the harvest hope that runs
 Before the path of milder suns ;
 Pleased while the sylvan world displays
 Its ripeness to the feeding gaze ;
 Pleased when the sullen winds resound the knell
 Of the resplendent miracle.

III.

But something whispers to my heart
 That, as we downward tend,
 Lycoris ! life requires an *art*
 To which our souls must bend ; 40
 A skill—to balance and supply ;
 And, ere the flowing fount be dry,
 As soon it must, a sense to sip,
 Or drink, with no fastidious lip.
 Then welcome, above all, the Guest
 Whose smiles, diffused o'er land and sea,
 Seem to recall the Deity
 Of youth into the breast :

May pensive Autumn ne'er present
 A claim to her disparagement ! 50
 While blossoms and the budding spray
 Inspire us in our own decay ;
 Still, as we nearer draw to life's dark goal,
 Be hopeful Spring the favourite of the Soul !

TO THE SAME

ENOUGH of climbing toil !—Ambition treads
 Here, as 'mid busier scenes, ground steep and
 rough,
 Or slippery even to peril ! and each step,
 As we for most uncertain recompense
 Mount toward the empire of the fickle clouds,
 Each weary step, dwarfing the world below,
 Induces, for its old familiar sights,
 Unacceptable feelings of contempt,
 With wonder mixed—that Man could e'er be tied,
 In anxious bondage, to such nice array 10
 And formal fellowship of petty things !
 —Oh ! 'tis the *heart* that magnifies this life,
 Making a truth and beauty of her own ;
 And moss-grown alleys, circumscribing shades,
 And gurgling rills, assist her in the work
 More efficaciously than realms outspread,
 As in a map, before the adventurer's gaze—
 Ocean and Earth contending for regard.

The umbrageous woods are left—how far bo-
 neath ! 19
 But lo ! where darkness seems to guard the mouth
 Of yon wild cave, whose jagged brows are fringed
 With flaccid threads of ivy, in the still
 And sultry air, depending motionless.
 Yet cool the space within, and not uncheered
 (As whoso enters shall ere long perceive)
 By stealthy influx of the timid day
 Mingling with night, such twilight to compose

As Numa loved ; when, in the Egerian grot,
 From the sage Nymph appearing at his wish
 He gained whate'er a regal mind might ask, 30
 Or need, of counsel breathed through lips divine.

Long as the heat shall rage, let that dim cave
 Protect us, there deciphering as we may
 Diluvian records ; or the sighs of Earth
 Interpreting ; or counting for old Time
 His minutes, by reiterated drops,
 Audible tears, from some invisible source
 That deepens upon fancy—more and more
 Drawn toward the centre whence those sighs creep
 forth

To awe the lightness of humanity. 40
 Or, shutting up thyself within thyself,
 There let me see thee sink into a mood
 Of gentler thought, protracted till thine eye
 Be calm as water when the winds are gone,
 And no one can tell whither. Dearest Friend !
 We two have known such happy hours together
 That, were power granted to replace them (fetched
 From out the pensive shadows where they lie)
 In the first warmth of their original sunshine,
 Loth should I be to use it : passing sweet 50
 Are the domains of tender memory !

SEPTEMBER, 1819

DEPARTING summer hath assumed
 An aspect tenderly illumed,
 The gentlest look of spring ;
 That calls from yonder leafy shade
 Unfaded, yet prepared to fade,
 A timely carolling.

No faint and hesitating trill,
 Such tribute as to winter chill
 The lonely redbreast pays !

Clear, loud, and lively is the din,
From social warblers gathering in
Their harvest of sweet lays. 10

Nor doth the example fail to cheer
Me, conscious that my leaf is sere,
And yellow on the bough :—
Fall, rosy garlands, from my head !
Ye myrtle wreaths, your fragrance shed
Around a younger brow !

Yet will I temperately rejoice ;
Wide is the range, and free the choice 20
Of undiscordant themes ;
Which, haply, kindred souls may prize
Not less than vernal ecstasies,
And passion's feverish dreams.

For deathless powers to verse belong,
And they like Demi-gods are strong
On whom the Muses smile ;
But some their function have disclaimed,
Best pleased with what is aptliest framed
To enervate and defile. 30

Not such the initiatory strains
Committed to the silent plains
In Britain's earliest dawn :
Trembled the groves, the stars grew pale,
While all-too-daringly the veil
Of nature was withdrawn !

Nor such the spirit-stirring note
When the live chords Alcæus smote,
Inflamed by sense of wrong ;
Woe ! woe to Tyrants ! from the lyre 40
Broke threateningly, in sparkles dire
Of fierce vindictive song.

And not unhallowed was the page
 By wingèd Love inscribed, to assuage
 The pangs of vain pursuit ;
 Love listening while the Lesbian Maid
 With finest touch of passion swayed
 Her own Æolian lute.

O ye, who patiently explore
 The wreck of Herculean lore,
 What rapture ! could ye seize
 Some Theban fragment, or unroll
 One precious, tender-hearted scroll
 Of pure Simonides.

50

That were, indeed, a genuine birth
 Of poesy ; a bursting forth
 Of genius from the dust :
 What Horace gloried to behold,
 What Maro loved, shall we unfold ?
 Can haughty Time be just !

60

MEMORY

A PEN—to register ; a key—
 That winds through secret wards ;
 Are well assigned to Memory
 By allegoric Bards.

As aptly, also, might be given
 A Pencil to her hand ;
 That, softening objects, sometimes even
 Outstrips the heart's demand ;

That smoothes foregone distress, the lines
 Of lingering care subdues,
 Long-vanished happiness refines,
 And clothes in brighter hues ;

100

Yet, like a tool of Fancy, works
Those Spectres to dilate
That startle Conscience, as she lurks
Within her lonely seat.

O ! that our lives, which flee so fast,
In purity were such,
That not an image of the past
Should fear that pencil's touch ! 20

Retirement then might hourly look
Upon a soothing scene,
Age steal to his allotted nook
Contented and serene ;

With heart as calm as lakes that sleep,
In frosty moonlight glistening ;
Or mountain rivers, where they creep
Along a channel smooth and deep,
To their own far-off murmurs listening. 29

THE unremitting voice of nightly streams
That wastes so oft, we think, its tuneful powers,
If neither soothing to the worm that gleams
Through dewy grass, nor small birds hushed in
 bowers,
Nor unto silent leaves and drowsy flowers,—
That voice of unpretending harmony
(For who what is shall measure by what seems
To be, or not to be,
Or tax high Heaven with prodigality ?)
Wants not a healing influence that can creep 10
Into the human breast, and mix with sleep
To regulate the motion of our dreams
For kindly issues—as through every clime
Was felt near murmuring brooks in earliest time ;
As, at this day, the rudest swains who dwell
Where torrents roar, or hear the tinkling knell
Of water-breaks, with grateful heart could tell.

IF THIS GREAT WORLD

If this great world of joy and pain
 Revolve in one sure track ;
 If freedom, set, will rise again,
 And virtue, flown, come back ;
 Woe to the purblind crew who fill
 The heart with each day's care ;
 Nor gain, from past or future, skill
 To bear, and to forbear !

8

THE LABOURER'S NOON-DAY HYMN

Up to the throne of God is borne
 The voice of praise at early morn,
 And he accepts the punctual hymn
 Sung as the light of day grows dim :

Nor will he turn his ear aside
 From holy offerings at noontide.
 Then here reposing let us raise
 A song of gratitude and praise.

What though our burthen be not light
 We need not toil from morn to night ;
 The respite of the mid-day hour
 Is in the thankful Creature's power.

10

Blest are the moments, doubly blest,
 That, drawn from this one hour of rest,
 Are with a ready heart bestowed
 Upon the service of our God !

Each field is then a hallowed spot,
 An altar is in each man's cot,
 A church in every grove that spreads
 Its living roof above our heads.

20

Look up to Heaven ! the industrious Sun
 Already half his race hath run ;
He cannot halt nor go astray,
 But our immortal Spirits may.

Lord ! since his rising in the East,
 If we have faltered or transgressed,
 Guide, from thy love's abundant source,
 What yet remains of this day's course :

Help with thy grace, through life's short day,
 Our upward and our downward way ; 30
 And glorify for us the west,
 When we shall sink to final rest.

TO MAY

THOUGH many suns have risen and set
 Since thou, blithe May, wert born,
 And Bards, who hailed thee, may forget
 Thy gifts, thy beauty scorn ;
 There are who to a birthday strain
 Confine not harp and voice,
 But evermore throughout thy reign
 Are grateful and rejoice !

Delicious odours ! music sweet,
 Too sweet to pass away ! 10
 Oh for a deathless song to meet
 The soul's desire—a lay
 That, when a thousand years are told,
 Should praise thee, genial Power !
 Through summer heat, autumnal cold,
 And winter's dreariest hour.

Earth, sea, thy presence feel—nor less,
 If yon ethereal blue
 With its soft smile the truth express,
 The heavens have felt it too. 20
 The inmost heart of man if glad
 Partakes a livelier cheer ;
 And eyes that cannot but be sad
 Let fall a brightened tear.

Since thy return, through days and weeks
 Of hope that grew by stealth,
 How many wan and faded cheeks
 Have kindled into health !
 The Old, by thee revived, have said,
 " Another year is ours ;"
 And wayworn Wanderers, poorly fed,
 Have smiled upon thy flowers.

30

Who tripping lips a merry song
 Amid his playful peers ?
 The tender Infant who was long
 A prisoner of fond fears ;
 But now, when every sharp-edged blast
 Is quiet in its sheath,
 His Mother leaves him free to taste
 Earth's sweetness in thy breath.

40

Thy help is with the weed that creeps
 Along the humblest ground ;
 No cliff so bare but on its steeps
 Thy favours may be found ;
 But most on some peculiar nook
 That our own hands have drest,
 Thou and thy train are proud to look,
 And seem to love it best.

And yet how pleased we wander forth
 When May is whispering, " Come !
 Choose from the bowers of virgin earth
 The happiest for your home ;
 Heaven's bounteous love through me is spread
 From sunshine, clouds, winds, waves,
 Drops on the mouldering turret's head,
 And on your turf-clad graves !"

50

Such greeting heard, away with sighs
 For lilies that must fade,
 Or " the rathe primrose as it dies
 Forsaken " in the shade !

60

Vernal fruitions and desires
Are linked in endless chase ;
While, as one kindly growth retires,
Another takes its place.

And what if thou, sweet May, hast known
Mishap by worm and blight ;
If expectations newly blown
Have perished in thy sight ;
If loves and joys, while up they sprung,
Were caught as in a snare ;
Such is the lot of all the young,
However bright and fair.

70

Lo ! Streams that April could not check
Are patient of thy rule ;
Gurgling in foamy water-break,
Loitering in glassy pool :
By thee, thee only, could be sent
Such gentle mists as glide,
Curling with unconfirmed intent,
On that green mountain's side.

80

How delicate the leafy veil
Through which yon house of God
Gleams 'mid the peace of this deep dale
By few but shepherds trod !
And lowly huts, near beaten ways,
No sooner stand attired
In thy fresh wreaths, than they for praise
Peep forth, and are admired.

Season of fancy and of hope,
Permit not for one hour
A blossom from thy crown to drop,
Nor add to it a flower !
Keep, lovely May, as if by touch
Of self-restraining art,
This modest charm of not too much,
Part seen, imagined part !

90

So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,
Would that the little Flowers were born to live,
Conscious of half the pleasure which they give ;

That to this mountain-daisy's self were known
The beauty of its star-shaped shadow, thrown
On the smooth surface of this naked stone !

And what if hence a bold desire should mount
High as the Sun, that he could take account
Of all that issues from his glorious fount !

So might he ken how by his sovereign aid 10
'These delicate companionships are made ;
And how he rules the pomp of light and shade ;

And were the Sister-power that shines by night
So privileged, what a countenance of delight
Would through the clouds break forth on human
sight !

Fond fancies ! wheresoe'er shall turn thine eye
On earth, air, ocean, or the starry sky,
Converse with Nature in pure sympathy ;

All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled,
Be Thou to love and praise alike impelled, 20
Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

INSCRIPTIONS

IN these fair vales hath many a Tree
At Wordsworth's suit been spared ;
And from the builder's hand this Stone,
For some rude beauty of its own,
Was rescued by the Bard :
So let it rest ; and time will come
When here the tender-hearted
May heave a gentle sigh for him,
As one of the departed.

9

THE massy Ways, carried across these heights
By Roman perseverance, are destroyed,
Or hidden under ground, like sleeping worms.
How venture then to hope that Time will spare
This humble Walk ? Yet on the mountain's side
A POET's hand first shaped it ; and the steps
Of that same Bard—repeated to and fro
At morn, at noon, and under moonlight skies
Through the vicissitudes of many a year—
Forbade the weeds to creep o'er its grey line. 10
No longer, scattering to the heedless winds
The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,
Shall he frequent these precincts ; locked no more
In earnest converse with belovèd Friends,
Here will he gather stores of ready bliss,
As from the beds and borders of a garden
Choice flowers are gathered ! But, if Power may
spring
Out of a farewell yearning—favoured more
Than kindred wishes mated suitably
With vain regrets—the Exile would consign 20
This Walk, his loved possession, to the care
Of those pure Minds that reverence the Muse.

INSCRIPTIONS SUPPOSED TO BE FOUND IN AND NEAR A HERMIT'S CELL

I.

HOPES, what are they ?—Beads of morning
Strung on slender blades of grass ;
Or a spider's web adorning
In a strait and treacherous pass.

What are fears but voices airy ?
Whispering harm where harm is not ;
And deluding the unwary
Till the fatal bolt is shot !

What is glory ?—in the socket
See how dying tapers fare !
What is pride ?—a whizzing rocket
That would emulate a star.

10

What is friendship ?—do not trust her,
Nor the vows which she has made ;
Diamonds dart their brightest lustre
From a palsy-shaken head.

What is truth ?—a staff rejected ;
Duty ?—an unwelcome clog ;
Joy ?—a moon by fits reflected
In a swamp or watery bog ;

20

Bright, as if through ether steering,
To the Traveller's eye it shone :
He hath hailed it re-appearing—
And as quickly it is gone ;

Such is Joy—as quickly hidden,
Or mis-shapen to the sight,
And by sullen weeds forbidden
To resume its native light.

What is youth ?—a dancing billow,
(Winds behind, and rocks before !)
Age ?—a drooping, tottering willow
On a flat and lazy shore. 30

What is peace ?—when pain is over,
And love ceases to rebel,
Let the last faint sigh discover
That precedes the passing-knell !

INSCRIBED UPON A ROCK .

II.

PAUSE, Traveller ! whosoe'er thou be
Whom chance may lead to this retreat,
Where silence yields reluctantly
Even to the fleecy straggler's bleat ;

Give voice to what my hand shall trace,
And fear not lest an idle sound
Of words unsuited to the place
Disturb its solitude profound.

I saw this Rock, while vernal air
Blew softly o'er the russet heath, 10
Uphold a Monument as fair
As church or abbey furnisheth.

Unsullied did it meet the day,
Like marble, white, like ether, pure ;
As if, beneath, some hero lay,
Honoured with costliest sepulture.

My fancy kindled as I gazed ;
And, ever as the sun shone forth,
The flattered structure glistened, blazed,
And seemed the proudest thing on earth. 20

But frost had reared the gorgeous Pile
 Unsound as those which Fortane builds—
 To undermine with secret guile,
 Sapped by the very beam that gilds.

And, while I gazed, with sudden shock
 Fell the whole Fabric to the ground ;
 And naked left this dripping Rock,
 With shapeless ruin spread around !

III.

HAST thou seen, with flash incessant,
 Bubbles gliding under ice.
 Bodied forth and evanescent,
 No one knows by what device ?

Such are thoughts !—A wind-swept meadow
 Mimicking a troubled sea,
 Such is life ; and death a shadow
 From the rock eternity !

8

NEAR THE SPRING OF THE HERMITAGE

IV.

TROUBLED long with warring notions,
 Long impatient of Thy rod,
 I resign my soul's emotions
 Unto Thee, mysterious God !

What avails the kindly shelter
 Yielded by this craggy rent,
 If my spirit toss and welter
 On the waves of discontent ?

Parching Summer hath no warrant
 To consume this crystal Well ;
 Rains, that make each rill a torrent,
 Neither sully it nor swell.

10

Thus, dishonouring not her station,
Would my Life present to Thee,
Gracious God, the pure oblation
Of divine tranquillity !

V.

Not seldom, clad in radiant vest,
Deceitfully goes forth the Morn ;
Not seldom Evening in the west
Sinks smilingly forsworn.

The smoothest seas will sometimes prove,
To the confiding Bark, untrue ;
And, if she trust the stars above
They can be treacherous too.

The umbrageous Oak, in pomp outspread,
Full oft, when storms the welkin rend, 10
Draws lightning down upon the head
It promised to defend.

But Thou art true, incarnate Lord,
Who didst vouchsafe for man to die ;
Thy smile is sure, Thy plighted word
No change can falsify !

I bent before Thy gracious throne,
And asked for peace on suppliant knee ;
And peace was given,—nor peace alone,
But faith sublimed to ecstasy ! 20

POEMS RELATING TO THE PERIOD OF OLD AGE

THE OLD CUMBERLAND BEGGAR

The class of Beggars, to which the Old Man here described belongs, will probably soon be extinct. It consisted of poor, and, mostly, old and infirm persons, who confined themselves to a stated round in their neighbourhood, and had certain fixed days, on which, at different houses, they regularly received alms, sometimes in money, but mostly in provisions.

I SAW an aged Beggar in my walk ;
And he was seated, by the highway side,
On a low structure of rude masonry
Built at the foot of a huge hill, that they
Who lead their horses down the steep rough road
May thence remount at ease. The aged Man
Had placed his staff across the broad smooth stone
That overlays the pile ; and, from a bag
All white with flour, the dole of village dames,
He drew his scraps and fragments, one by one ; 10
And scanned them with a fixed and serious look
Of idle computation. In the sun,
Upon the second step of that small pile,
Surrounded by those wild unpeopled hills,
He sat, and ate his food in solitude :
And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,
That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers
Fell on the ground ; and the small mountain birds,
Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal, 20
Approached within the length of half his staff.

Him from my childhood have I known ; and then
 He was so old, he seems not older now ;
 He travels on, a solitary Man,
 So helpless in appearance, that for him
 The sauntering Horseman throws not with a slack
 And careless hand his alms upon the ground,
 But stops,—that he may safely lodge the coin
 Within the old Man's hat ; nor quits him so,
 But still, when he has given his horse the rein, 30
 Watches the aged Beggar with a look
 Sidelong, and half-reverted. She who tends
 The toll-gate, when in summer at her door
 She turns her wheel, if on the road she sees
 The aged Beggar coming, quits her work,
 And lifts the latch for him that he may pass.
 The post-boy, when his rattling wheels o'ertake
 The aged Beggar in the woody lane,
 Shouts to him from behind ; and, if thus warned
 The old man does not change his course, the boy
 Turns with less noisy wheels to the roadside, 41
 And passes gently by, without a curse
 Upon his lips or anger at his heart.

He travels on, a solitary Man ;
 His age has no companion. On the ground
 His eyes are turned, and, as he moves along,
They move along the ground ; and, evermore,
 Instead of common and habitual sight
 Of fields with rural works, of hill and dale,
 And the blue sky, one little span of earth 50
 Is all his prospect. Thus, from day to day,
 Bow-bent, his eyes for ever on the ground,
 He plies his weary journey ; seeing still,
 And seldom knowing that he sees, some straw,
 Some scattered leaf, or marks which, in one track,
 The nails of cart or chariot-wheel have left
 Impressed on the white road,—in the same line,
 At distance still the same. Poor Traveller !
 His staff trails with him ; scarcely do his feet
 Disturb the summer dust ; he is so still 60

In look and motion, that the cottage curs,
 Ere he has passed the door, will turn away,
 Weary of barking at him. Boys and girls,
 The vacant and the busy, maids and youths,
 And urchins newly breeched—all pass him by :
 Him even the slow-paced waggon leaves behind.

But deem not this Man useless.—Statesmen ! ye
 Who are so restless in your wisdom, ye
 Who have a broom still ready in your hands
 To rid the world of nuisances ; ye proud, 70
 Heart-swoln, while in your pride ye contemplate
 Your talents, power, or wisdom, deem him not
 A burthen of the earth ! 'Tis Nature's law
 That none, the meanest of created things,
 Of forms created the most vile and brute,
 The dullest or most noxious, should exist
 Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,
 A life and soul, to every mode of being
 Inseparably linked. Then be assured
 That least of all can aught—that ever owned 80
 The heaven-regarding eye and front sublime
 Which man is born to—sink, howe'er depressed,
 So low as to be scorned without a sin ;
 Without offence to God cast out of view ;
 Like the dry remnant of a garden-flower
 Whose seeds are shed, or as an implement
 Worn out and worthless. While from door to door,
 This old Man creeps, the villagers in him
 Behold a record which together binds
 Past deeds and offices of charity, 90
 Else unremembered, and so keeps alive
 The kindly mood in hearts which lapse of years,
 And that half-wisdom half-experience gives,
 Make slow to feel, and by sure steps resign
 To selfishness and cold oblivious cares.
 Among the farms and solitary huts,
 Hamlets and thinly-scattered villages,
 Where'er the aged Beggar takes his rounds,
 The mild necessity of use compels

To acts of love ; and habit does the work 100
 Of reason ; yet prepares that after-joy
 Which reason cherishes. And thus the soul,
 By that sweet taste of pleasure unpursued,
 Doth find herself insensibly disposed
 To virtue and true goodness.

Some there are,
 By their good works exalted, lofty minds,
 And meditative, authors of delight
 And happiness, which to the end of time
 Will live, and spread, and kindle : even such minds
 In childhood, from this solitary Being, 110
 Or from like wanderer, haply have received
 (A thing more precious far than all that books
 Or the solitudes of love can do !)
 That first mild touch of sympathy and thought,
 In which they found their kindred with a world
 Where want and sorrow were. The easy man
 Who sits at his own door,—and, like the pear
 That overhangs his head from the green wall,
 Feeds in the sunshine ; the robust and young,
 The prosperous and unthinking, they who live 120
 Sheltered, and flourish in a little grove
 Of their own kindred ;—all behold in him
 A silent monitor, which on their minds
 Must needs impress a transitory thought
 Of self-congratulation, to the heart
 Of each recalling his peculiar boons,
 His charters and exemptions ; and, perchance,
 Though he to no one give the fortitude
 And circumspection needful to preserve
 His present blessings, and to husband up 130
 The respite of the season, he, at least,
 And 'tis no vulgar service, makes them felt.

Yet further.—Many, I believe, there are
 Who live a life of virtuous decency,
 Men who can hear the Decalogue and feel
 No self-reproach ; who of the moral law
 Established in the land where they abide

Are strict observers ; and not negligent
 In acts of love to those with whom they dwell,
 Their kindred, and the children of their blood. 140
 Praise be to such, and to their slumbers peace !
 —But of the poor man ask, the abject poor ;
 Go, and demand of him, if there be here
 In this cold abstinence from evil deeds,
 And these inevitable charities,
 Wherewith to satisfy the human soul ?
 No—man is dear to man ; the poorest poor
 Long for some moments in a weary life
 When they can know and feel that they have been,
 Themselves, the fathers and the dealers-out 150
 Of some small blessings ; have been kind to such
 As needed kindness, for this single cause,
 That we have all of us one human heart.
 —Such pleasure is to one kind Being known,
 My neighbour, when with punctual care, each week,
 Duly as Friday comes, though pressed herself
 By her own wants, she from her store of meal
 Takes one unsparing handful for the scrip
 Of this old Mendicant, and, from her door
 Returning with exhilarated heart, 160
 Sits by her fire, and builds her hope in heaven.

Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !
 And while in that vast solitude to which
 The tide of things has borne him, he appears
 To breathe and live but for himself alone,
 Unblamed, uninjured, let him bear about
 The good which the benignant law of Heaven
 Has hung around him : and, while life is his,
 Still let him prompt the unlettered villagers
 To tender offices and pensive thoughts. 170
 —Then let him pass, a blessing on his head !
 And, long as he can wander, let him breathe
 The freshness of the valleys ; let his blood
 Struggle with frosty air and winter snows ;
 And let the chartered wind that sweeps the heath
 Beat his grey locks against his withered face.

Reverence the hope whose vital anxiousness
 Gives the last human interest to his heart.
 May never HOUSE, misnamed of INDUSTRY,
 Make him a captive !—for that pent-up din, 180
 Those life-consuming sounds that clog the air,
 Be his the natural silence of old age !
 Let him be free of mountain solitudes ;
 And have around him, whether heard or not,
 The pleasant melody of woodland birds.
 Few are his pleasures : if his eyes have now
 Been doomed so long to settle upon earth
 That not without some effort they behold
 The countenance of the horizontal sun,
 Rising or setting, let the light at least 190
 Find a free entrance to their languid orbs,
 And let him, *where* and *when* he will, sit down
 Beneath the trees, or on a grassy bank
 Of highway side, and with the little birds
 Share his chance-gathered meal ; and, finally,
 As in the eye of Nature he has lived,
 So in the eye of Nature let him die !

THE FARMER OF TILSBURY VALE

'Tis not for the unfeeling, the falsely refined,
 The squeamish in taste, and the narrow of mind,
 And the small critic wielding his delicate pen,
 That I sing of old Adam, the pride of old men.

He dwells in the centre of London's wide Town ;
 His staff is a sceptre—his grey hairs a crown ;
 And his bright eyes look brighter, set off by the streak
 Of the unfaded rose that still blooms on his cheek.

'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—'mid the joy
 Of the fields, he collected that bloom, when a boy ;
 That countenance there fashioned, which, spite of a
 stain 11
 That his life hath received, to the last will remain.

A Farmer he was ; and his house far and near
Was the boast of the country for excellent cheer ;
How oft have I heard in sweet Tilsbury Vale
Of the silver-rimmed horn whence he dealt his mild
ale !

Yet Adam was far as the farthest from ruin,
His fields seemed to know what their Master was
doing ;
And turnips, and corn-land, and meadow, and lea,
All caught the infection—as generous as he. 20

Yet Adam prized little the feast and the bowl,—
The fields better suited the ease of his soul :
He strayed through the fields like an indolent wight,
The quiet of nature was Adam's delight.

For Adam was simple in thought ; and the poor,
Familiar with him, made an inn of his door :
He gave them the best that he had ; or, to say
What less may mislead you, they took it away.

Thus thirty smooth years did he thrive on his farm :
The Genius of plenty preserved him from harm :
At length, what to most is a season of sorrow, 31
His means are run out,—he must beg, or must borrow.

To the neighbours he went,—all were free with their
money ;
For his hive had so long been replenished with honey,
That they dreamt not of dearth ;—He continued his
rounds,
Knocked here—and knocked there, pounds still
adding to pounds.

He paid what he could with his ill-gotten pelf,
And something, it might be, reserved for himself :
Then (what is too true) without hinting a word, 39
Turned his back on the country—and off like a bird.

You lift up your eyes !—but I guess that you frame
 A judgement too harsh of the sin and the shame ;
 In him it was scarcely a business of art,
 For this he did all in the *ease* of his heart.

To London—a sad emigration I ween—
 With his grey hairs he went from the brook and the
 green ;
 And there, with small wealth but his legs and his hands,
 As lonely he stood as a crow on the sands.

All trades, as need was, did old Adam assume,—
 Served as stable-boy, errand-boy, porter, and groom ;
 But nature is gracious, necessity kind, 51
 And, in spite of the shame that may lurk in his mind,

He seems ten birthdays younger, is green and is stout ;
 Twice as fast as before does his blood run about ;
 You would say that each hair of his beard was alive,
 And his fingers as busy as bees in a hive.

For he's not like an Old Man that leisurely goes
 About work that he knows, in a track that he knows ;
 But often his mind is compelled to demur, 59
 And you guess that the more then his body must stir.

In the throng of the town like a stranger is he,
 Like one whose own country's far over the sea ;
 And Nature, while through the great city he hies,
 Full ten times a day takes his heart by surprise.

This gives him the fancy of one that is young,
 More of soul in his face than of words on his tongue ;
 Like a maiden of twenty he trembles and sighs,
 And tears of fifteen will come into his eyes.

What's a tempest to him, or the dry parching heats ?
 Yet he watches the clouds that pass over the streets ;
 With a look of such earnestness often will stand, 71
 You might think he'd twelve reapers at work in the
 Strand.

Where proud Covent-garden, in desolate hours
Of snow and hoar-frost, spreads her fruits and her
flowers,

Old Adam will smile at the pains that have made
Poor winter look fine in such strange masquerade.

'Mid coaches and chariots, a waggon of straw,
Like a magnet, the heart of old Adam can draw ;
With a thousand soft pictures his memory will teem,
And his hearing is touched with the sounds of a
dream. 80

Up the Haymarket hill he oft whistles his way,
Thrusts his hands in a waggon, and smells at the hay ;
He thinks of the fields he so often hath mown,
And is happy as if the rich freight were his own.

But chiefly to Smithfield he loves to repair,—
If you pass by at morning, you'll meet with him
there.

The breath of the cows you may see him inhale,
And his heart all the while is in Tilsbury Vale.

Now farewell, old Adam ! when low thou art laid,
May one blade of grass spring up over thy head ;
And I hope that thy grave, wheresoever it be, 91
Will bear the wind sigh through the leaves of a tree.

THE SMALL CELANDINE

THERE is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain ;
And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again !

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distress,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed
 And recognised it, though an altered form, 1C
 Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
 And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped, and said with inly-muttered voice,
 "It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold :
 This neither is its courage nor its choice,
 But its necessity in being old.

"The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew ;
 It cannot help itself in its decay ;
 Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue."
 And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey. 20

To be a Prodigal's Favourite—then, worse truth,
 A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot !
 O Man, that from thy fair and shining youth
 Age might but take the things Youth needed not !

ANIMAL TRANQUILLITY AND DECAY

THE little hedgerow birds,
 That peck along the road, regard him not.
 He travels on, and in his face, his step,
 His gait, is one expression : every limb,
 His look and bending figure, all bespeak
 A man who does not move with pain, but moves
 With thought.—He is insensibly subdued
 To settled quiet : he is one by whom
 All effort seems forgotten ; one to whom
 Long patience hath such mild composure given, 10
 That patience now doth seem a thing of which
 He hath no need. He is by nature led
 To peace so perfect that the young behold
 With envy, what the Old Man hardly feels.

EPITAPHS AND ELEGIAC PIECES

ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF —

I COME, ye little noisy Crew,
Not long your pastime to prevent ;
I heard the blessing which to you
Our common Friend and Father sent,
I kissed his cheek before he died ;
And when his breath was fled,
I raised, while kneeling by his side,
His hand :—it dropped like lead.
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all
That can be done, will never fall
Like his till they are dead.
By night or day, blow foul or fair,
Ne'er will the best of all your train
Play with the locks of his white hair,
Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours ;
But he could see the woods and plains,
Could hear the wind and mark the showers
Come streaming down the streaming panes.
Now stretched beneath his grass-green mound
He rests a prisoner of the ground. 25
He loved the breathing air,
He loved the sun, but if it rise
Or set, to him where now he lies,
Brings not a moment's care.

Alas ! what idle words ; but take
 The Dirge which for our Master's sake
 And yours, love prompted me to make.
 The rhymes so homely in attire
 With learned ears may ill agree, 30
 But chanted by your Orphan Quire
 Will make a touching melody.

DIRGE

Mourn, Shepherd, near thy old grey stone ;
 Thou Angler, by the silent flood ;
 And mourn when thou art all alone,
 Thou Woodman, in the distant wood !

Thou one blind Sailor, rich in joy
 Though blind, thy tunes in sadness hum ;
 And mourn, thou poor half-witted Boy !
 Born deaf, and living deaf and dumb. 40

Thou drooping sick Man, bless the Guide
 Who checked or turned thy headstrong youth,
 As he before had sanctified
 Thy infancy with heavenly truth.

Ye Striplings, light of heart and gay,
 Bold settlers on some foreign shore,
 Give, when your thoughts are turned this way,
 A sigh to him whom we deplore.

For us who here in funeral strain
 With one accord our voices raise, 50
 Let sorrow overcharged with pain
 Be lost in thankfulness and praise.

And when our hearts shall feel a sting
 From ill we meet or good we miss,
 May touches of his memory bring
 Fond healing, like a mother's kiss.

BY THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE SOME YEARS AFTER.

Long time his pulse hath ceased to beat ;
But benefits, his gift, we trace—
Expressed in every eye we meet
Round this dear Vale, his native place.

60

To stately Hall and Cottage rude
Flowed from his life what still they hold,
Light pleasures, every day renewed ;
And blessings half a century old.

Oh true of heart, of spirit gay,
Thy faults, where not already gone
From memory, prolong their stay
For charity's sweet sake alone.

Such solace find we for our loss ;
And what beyond this thought we crave
Comes in the promise from the Cross,
Shining upon thy happy grave.¹

70

ELEGIAC STANZAS

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE, IN A
STORM, PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I WAS thy neighbour once, thou rugged Pile !
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee :
I saw thee every day ; and all the while
Thy Form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air !
So like, so very like, was day to day !
Whene'er I looked, thy Image still was there ;
It trembled, but it never passed away.

¹ See upon the subject of the three foregoing pieces " Matthew," etc., pp. 403-408.

How perfect was the calm ! it seemed no sleep ;
No mood, which season takes away, or brings : 10
I could have fancied that the mighty Deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle Things.

Ah ! THEN, if mine had been the Painter's hand,
To express what then I saw ; and add the gleam,
The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the Poet's dream ;

I would have planted thee, thou hoary Pile,
Amid a world how different from this !
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile ;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss. 20

Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years ; a chronicle of heaven ;—
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.

A Picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such Picture would I at that time have made : 30
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been,—'tis so no more ;
I have submitted to a new control :
A power is gone, which nothing can restore ;
A deep distress hath humanised my Soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea, and be what I have been :
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene. 40

Then, Beaumont, Friend ! who would have been the
Friend,

If he had lived, of Him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend ;
This sea in anger, and that dismal shore.

O 'tis a passionate Work !—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here ;
That Hulk which labours in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear !

And this huge Castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves, 50
Cased in the unfeeling armour of old time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the Kind !
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied ; for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude, and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne !
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here.—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn. 60

ELEGIAC VERSES

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN WORDSWORTH,

Commander of the E. I. Company's ship, the Earl of Abergavenny,
in which he perished by calamitous shipwreck, February 6, 1805.
Composed near the Mountain track, that leads from Grasmere
through Grisdale Hawes, where it descends towards Patterdale.

I.

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo !
That instant, startled by the shock,
The Buzzard mounted from the rock
Deliberate and slow :

Lord of the air, he took his flight ;
Oh ! could he on that woeful night
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,
For one poor moment's space to Thee,
And all who struggled with the Sea,
When safety was so near.

10

II.

Thus in the weakness of my heart
I spoke (but let that pang be still)
When rising from the rock at will,
I saw the Bird depart.
And let me calmly bless the Power
That meets me in this unknown Flower,
Affecting type of him I mourn !
With calmness suffer and believe,
And grieve, and know that I must grieve,
Not cheerless, though forlorn.

20

III.

Here did we stop ; and here looked round
While each into himself descends,
For that last thought of parting Friends
That is not to be found.
Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,
Our home and his, his heart's delight,
His quiet heart's selected home.
But time before him melts away,
And he hath feeling of a day
Of blessedness to come.

30

IV.

Full soon in sorrow did I weep,
Taught that the mutual hope was dust,
In sorrow, but for higher trust,
How miserably deep !

All vanished in a single word,
 A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard.
 Sea—Ship—drowned—Shipwreck—so it came,
 The meek, the brave, the good, was gone ;
 He who had been our living John
 Was nothing but a name.

40

V.

That was indeed a parting ! oh,
 Glad am I, glad that it is past ;
 For there were some on whom it cast
 Unutterable woe.
 But they as well as I have gains ;—
 From many a humble source, to pains
 Like these, there comes a mild release ;
 Even here I feel it, even this Plant
 Is in its beauty ministrant
 To comfort and to peace.

50

VI.

He would have loved thy modest grace,
 Meek Flower ! To Him I would have said,
 “ It grows upon its native bed
 Beside our Parting-place ;
 There, cleaving to the ground, it lies
 With multitude of purple eyes,
 Spangling a cushion green like moss ;
 But we will see it, joyful tide !
 Some day, to see it in its pride,
 The mountain will we cross.”

60

VII.

—Brother and friend, if verse of mine
 Have power to make thy virtues known,
 Here let a monumental Stone
 Stand—sacred as a Shrine ;
 And to the few who pass this way,
 Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,

Long as these mighty rocks endure,—
 Oh do not Thou too fondly brood,
 Although deserving of all good,
 On any earthly hope, however pure !

70

LINES

Composed at Grasmere, during a walk one Evening, after a stormy day, the Author having just read in a Newspaper that the dissolution of Mr. Fox was hourly expected.

Loud is the Vale ! the Voice is up
 With which she speaks when storms are gone,
 A mighty unison of streams !
 Of all her Voices, One !

Loud is the Vale ;—this inland Depth
 In peace is roaring like the Sea ;
 Yon star upon the mountain-top
 Is listening quietly.

Sad was I, even to pain deprest,
 Importunate and heavy load !

10

The Comforter hath found me here,
 Upon this lonely road ;

 And many thousands now are sad—
 Wait the fulfilment of their fear ;
 For he must die who is their stay,
 Their glory disappear.

A Power is passing from the earth
 To breathless Nature's dark abyss ;
 But when the great and good depart
 What is it more than this—

20

That Man, who is from God sent forth,
 Doth yet again to God return ?—
 Such ebb and flow must ever be,
 Then wherefore should we mourn ?

WRITTEN AFTER THE DEATH OF
CHARLES LAMB

To a good Man of most dear memory
This Stone is sacred. Here he lies apart
From the great city where he first drew breath,
Was reared and taught; and humbly earned his bread,
To the strict labours of the merchant's desk
By duty chained. Not seldom did those tasks
Tease, and the thought of time so spent depress,
His spirit, but the recompense was high;
Firm Independence, Bounty's rightful sire;
Affections, warm as sunshine, free as air; 10
And when the precious hours of leisure came,
Knowledge and wisdom, gained from converse sweet
With books, or while he ranged the crowded streets
With a keen eye, and overflowing heart:
So genius triumphed over seeming wrong,
And poured out truth in works by thoughtful love
Inspired—works potent over smiles and tears.
And as round mountain-tops the lightning plays,
Thus innocently sported, breaking forth
As from a cloud of some grave sympathy, 20
Humour and wild instinctive wit, and all
The vivid flashes of his spoken words.
From the most gentle creature nursed in fields
Had been derived the name he bore—a name,
Wherever Christian altars have been raised,
Hallowed to meekness and to innocence;
And if in him meekness at times gave way,
Provoked out of herself by troubles strange,
Many and strange, that hung about his life;
Still, at the centre of his being, lodged 30
A soul by resignation sanctified:
And if too often, self-reproached, he felt
That innocence belongs not to our kind,
A power that never ceased to abide in him,
Charity, 'mid the multitude of sins
That she can cover, left not his exposed

To an unforgiving judgement from just Heaven.
O, he was good, if e'er a good Man lived !

* * * / * *

From a reflecting mind and sorrowing heart
Those simple lines flowed with an earnest wish, 40
Though but a doubting hope, that they might serve
Fitly to guard the precious dust of him
Whose virtues called them forth. That aim is missed ;
For much that truth most urgently required
Had from a faltering pen been asked in vain :
Yet, haply, on the printed page received,
The imperfect record, there, may stand unblamed
As long as verse of mine shall breathe the air
Of memory, or see the light of love.

Thou wert a scorner of the fields, my Friend, 50
But more in show than truth ; and from the fields,
And from the mountains, to thy rural grave
Transported, my soothed spirit hovers o'er
Its green untrodden turf, and blowing flowers ;
And taking up a voice shall speak (tho' still
Awed by the theme's peculiar sanctity
Which words less free presumed not even to touch)
Of that fraternal love, whose heaven-lit lamp
From infancy, through manhood, to the last
Of threescore years, and to thy latest hour, 60
Burnt on with ever-strengthening light, enshrined
Within thy bosom.

“ Wonderful ” hath been
The love established between man and man,
“ Passing the love of women ; ” and between
Man and his help-mate in fast wedlock joined
Through God, is raised a spirit and soul of love
Without whose blissful influence Paradise
Had been no Paradise ; and earth were now
A waste where creatures bearing human form,
Direst of savage beasts, would roam in fear, 70
Joyless and comfortless. Our days glide on ;
And let him grieve who cannot choose but grieve
That he hath been an Elm without his Vine,

And her bright dower of clustering charities,
 That, round his trunk and branches, might have clung
 Enriching and adorning. Unto thee,
 Not so enriched, not so adorned, to thee
 Was given (say rather thou of later birth
 Wert given to her) a Sister—'tis a word
 Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek, 80
 The self-restraining, and the ever-kind ;
 In whom thy reason and intelligent heart
 Found—for all interests, hopes, and tender cares,
 All softening, humanising, hallowing powers,
 Whether withheld, or for her sake unsought—
 More than sufficient recompense !

Her love

(What weakness prompts the voice to tell it here ?)
 Was as the love of mothers ; and when years,
 Lifting the boy to man's estate, had called
 The long-protected to assume the part 90
 Of a protector, the first filial tie
 Was undissolved ; and, in or out of sight,
 Remained imperishably interwoven
 With life itself. Thus, 'mid a shifting world,
 Did they together testify of time
 And season's difference—a double tree
 With two collateral stems sprung from one root ;
 Such were they—such thro' life they *might* have been
 In union, in partition only such ;
 Otherwise wrought the will of the Most High ; 100
 Yet, thro' all visitations and all trials,
 Still they were faithful ; like two vessels launched
 From the same beach one ocean to explore
 With mutual help, and sailing—to their league
 True, as inexorable winds, or bars
 Floating or fixed of polar ice, allow.

But turn we rather, let my spirit turn
 With thine, O silent and invisible Friend !
 To those dear intervals, nor rare nor brief,
 When reunited, and by choice withdrawn
 From miscellaneous converse, ye were taught

That the remembrance of foregone distress,
 And the worse fear of future ill (which oft
 Doth hang around it, as a sickly child
 Upon its mother) may be both alike
 Disarmed of power to unsettle present good
 So prized, and things inward and outward held
 In such an even balance, that the heart
 Acknowledges God's grace, his mercy feels,
 And in its depth of gratitude is still. 120

O gift divine of quiet sequestration !
 The hermit, exercised in prayer and praise,
 And feeding daily on the hope of heaven,
 Is happy in his vow, and fondly cleaves
 To life-long singleness ; but happier far
 Was to your souls, and, to the thoughts of others,
 A thousand times more beautiful appeared,
 Your *dual* loneliness. The sacred tie
 Is broken ; yet why grieve ? for Time but holds
 His moiety in trust, till Joy shall lead 130
 To the blest world where parting is unknown.

EXTEMPORE EFFUSION UPON THE DEATH OF JAMES HOGG

NOVEMBER, 1835.

WHEN first, descending from the moorlands,
 I saw the Stream of Yarrow glide
 Along a bare and open valley,
 The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide.

When last along its banks I wandered,
 Through groves that had begun to shed
 Their golden leaves upon the pathways,
 My steps the Border-minstrel led.

The mighty Minstrel breathes no longer,
 'Mid mouldering ruins low he lies ; 10
 And death upon the braes of Yarrow,
 Has closed the Shepherd-poet's eyes :

Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
 From sign to sign, its steadfast course,
 Since every mortal power of Coleridge
 Was frozen at its marvellous source ;

The rapt One, of the godlike forehead,
 The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth :
 And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
 Has vanished from his lonely hearth. 20

Like clouds that rake the mountain-summits,
 Or waves that own no curbing hand,
 How fast has brother followed brother,
 From sunshine to the sunless land !

Yet I, whose lids from infant slumber
 Were earlier raised, remain to hear
 A timid voice, that asks in whispers,
 " Who next will drop and disappear ?"

Our haughty life is crowned with darkness,
 Like London with its own black wreath, 30
 On which with thee, O Crabbe ! forth-looking,
 I gazed from Hampstead's breezy heath.

As if but yesterday departed,
 Thou too art gone before ; but why,
 O'er ripe fruit, seasonably gathered,
 Should frail survivors heave a sigh ?

Mourn rather for that holy Spirit,
 Sweet as the spring, as ocean deep ;
 For Her¹ who, ere her summer faded,
 Has sunk into a breathless sleep. 40

No more of old romantic sorrows,
 For slaughtered Youth or love-lorn Maid !
 With sharper grief is Yarrow smitten,
 And Ettrick mourns with her their Poet dead.

¹ Mrs. Hemans.

ODE

INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOL- LECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Child is father of the Man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II.

The Rainbow comes and goes, 10
And lovely is the Rose,
The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair ;
The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound 20
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief :
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong :
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;

I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,

And all the earth is gay ;

Land and sea

30

Give themselves up to jollity,

And with the heart of May

Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—

Thou Child of Joy,

Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy !

IV.

Ye blessèd Creatures, I have heard the call

Ye to each other make ; I see

The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;

My heart is at your festival,

My head hath its coronal,

40

The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.

Oh evil day ! if I were sullen

While Earth herself is adorning,

This sweet May-morning,

And the Children are culling

On every side,

In a thousand valleys far and wide,

Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm,

And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm :—

I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !

50

—But there's a Tree, of many, one,

A single Field which I have looked upon,

Both of them speak of something that is gone :

The Pansy at my feet

Doth the same tale repeat :

Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?

Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

V.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :

The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,

Hath had elsewhere its setting,

60

And cometh from afar :

Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy ;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended ;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

70

VI.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

80

VII.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes !
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art ;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral ;
 And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song :
 Then will he fit his tongue

90

To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside, 100
 And with new joy and pride
 The little Actor cons another part ;
 Filling from time to time his " humorous stage "
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
 That Life brings with her in her equipage ;
 As if his whole vocation
 Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy Soul's immensity ;
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep 110
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—
 Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !
 On whom those truths do rest,
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
 A Presence which is not to be put by ; 120
 [To whom the grave
 Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight
 Of day or the warm light,
 A place of thought where we in waiting lie¹ ;]
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight, 131
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

¹ Found in edd. 1807 and 1815 ; omitted from ed. 1820 and all subsequent issues in consequence of Coleridge's adverse criticism. See *Biographia Literaria*, chap. xxii.

IX.

O joy ! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive !

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction : not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest ;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed 140
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :—

Not for these I raise
The songs of thanks and praise ;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings ;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature 150
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :

But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing ;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,
To perish never : 160

Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy !

Hence in a season of calm weather
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the shore, 170
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !
 And let the young Lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound !

We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May !

What though the radiance which was once so bright
 Be now for ever taken from my sight, 180

Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower

We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind ;

In the primal sympathy

Which having been must ever be ;

In the soothing thoughts that spring

Out of human suffering ;

In the faith that looks through death,

In years that bring the philosophic mind. 190

XI.

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,
 Forebode not any severing of our loves !

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;

I only have relinquished one delight

To live beneath your more habitual sway.

I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,

Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;

The innocent brightness of a new-born Day

Is lovely yet ;

The Clouds that gather round the setting sun 200

Do take a sober colouring from an eye

That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;

Another race hath been, and other palms are won.

Thanks to the human heart by which we live,

Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,

To me the meanest flower that blows can give

Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

ON NATURE'S INVITATION DO I COME

ON Nature's invitation do I come,
By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice mislead,
That made the calmest, fairest spot on earth,
With all its unappropriated good,
My own ; and not mine only, for with me
Entrenched—say rather peacefully embowered—
Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,
A younger orphan of a Home extinct,
The only daughter of my parents dwells : 9
Aye, think on that, my heart, and cease to stir ;
Pause upon that, and let the breathing frame
No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.
Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God
For what hath been bestowed, then where, where
then
Shall gratitude find rest ? Mine eyes did ne'er
Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind
Take pleasure in the midst of happy thoughts,
But either she, whom now I have, who now
Divides with me this loved abode, was there,
Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps turned,
Her voice was like a hidden Bird that sang ; 21
The thought of her was like a flash of light
Or an unseen companionship, a breath
Or fragrance independent of the wind.
In all my goings, in the new and old
Of all my meditations, and in this
Favourite of all, in this the most of all. . . .

Embrace me then, ye hills, and close me in.
 Now in the clear and open day I feel
 Your guardianship : I take it to my heart ; 30
 'Tis like the solemn shelter of the night.
 But I would call thee beautiful ; for mild,
 And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,
 Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,
 Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou art
 pleased,
 Pleased with thy crags, and woody steeps, thy
 Lake,
 Its one green Island, and its winding shores,
 The multitude of little rocky hills,
 Thy Church, and cottages of mountain-stone
 Clustered like stars some few, but single most,
 And lurking dimly in their shy retreats, 41
 Or glancing at each other cheerful looks,
 Like separated stars with clouds between.

BLEAK SEASON WAS IT, TURBULENT AND WILD

BLEAK season was it, turbulent and wild,
 When hitherward we journeyed side by side,
 Through bursts of sunshine and through flying
 showers,
 Paced the long Vales, how long they were, and yet
 How fast that length of way was left behind,
 Wensley's rich Vale and Sedbergh's naked heights,
 The frosty wind, as if to make amends
 For its keen breath, was aiding to our steps,
 And drove us onward as two ships at sea ;
 Or, like two birds, companions in mid-air, 10
 Parted and reunited by the blast.
 Stern was the face of nature ; we rejoiced
 In that stern countenance ; for our souls thence drew
 A feeling of their strength. The naked trees,
 The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared
 To question us, " Whence come ye ? To what end ? "

AMONG ALL LOVELY THINGS MY LOVE HAD
BEEN

AMONG all lovely things my Love had been ;
Had noted well the stars, all flowers that grew
About her home ; but she had never seen
A Glow-worm, never one, and this I knew.

While riding near her home one stormy night
A single Glow-worm did I chance to espy ;
I gave a fervent welcome to the sight,
And from my Horse I leapt ; great joy had I.

Upon a leaf the Glow-worm did I lay,
To bear it with me through the stormy night : 10
And, as before, it shone without dismay ;
Albeit putting forth a fainter light.

When to the Dwelling of my Love I came,
I went into the Orchard quietly ;
And left the Glow-worm, blessing it by name,
Laid safely by itself, beneath a Tree.

The whole next day, I hoped, and hoped with fear ;
At night the Glow-worm shone beneath the Tree :
I led my Lucy to the spot, " Look here !" 20
Oh ! joy it was for her, and joy for me !

TO A CHILD

WRITTEN IN HER ALBUM.

SMALL service is true service while it lasts :
Of humblest Friends, bright Creature ! scorn not one :
The Daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dew-drop from the Sun.

FROM "THE PRELUDE"

WORDSWORTH'S BOYHOOD

[Book I, lines 301-400.]

FAIR seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear :
Much favoured in my birthplace, and no less
In that belovèd Vale to which erelong
We were transplanted—there were we let loose
For sports of wider range. Ere I had told
Ten birth-days, when among the mountain-slopes
Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had snapped
The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy,
With store of springes o'er my shoulder hung 310
To range the open heights where woodcocks run
Among the smooth green turf. Through half the
night,

Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied
That anxious visitation ;—moon and stars
Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace
That dwelt among them. Sometimes it befell
In these night wanderings, that a strong desire
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird
Which was the captive of another's toil 320
Became my prey ; and when the deed was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less when spring had warmed the cultured
Vale,

Moved we as plunderers where the mother-bird
Had in high places built her lodge ; though mean
Our object and inglorious, yet the end
Was not ignoble. Oh ! when I have hung 330
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock
But ill sustained, and almost (so it seemed)
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that time
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
Blow through my ear ! the sky seemed not a sky
Of earth—and with what motion moved the clouds !

Dust as we are, the immortal spirit grows 340
Like harmony in music ; there is a dark
Inscrutable workmanship that reconciles
Discordant elements, makes them cling together
In one society. How strange that all
The terrors, pains, and early miseries,
Regrets, vexations, lassitudes interfused
Within my mind, should e'er have borne a part,
And that a needful part, in making up
The calm existence that is mine when I
Am worthy of myself ! Praise to the end ! 350
Thanks to the means which Nature deigned to
employ ;

Whether her fearless visitings, or those
That came with soft alarm, like hurtless light
Opening the peaceful clouds ; or she may use
Severer interventions, ministry
More palpable, as best might suit her aim.

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree
Within a rocky cave, its usual home. 359
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth

And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
 Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on ;
 Leaving behind her still, on either side,
 Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
 Until they melted all into one track
 Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
 Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
 With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
 Upon the summit of a craggy ridge, 370
 The horizon's utmost boundary ; far above
 Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
 She was an elfin pinnace ; lustily
 I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
 And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
 Went heaving through the water like a swan ;
 When, from behind that craggy steep till then
 The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
 As if with voluntary power instinct
 Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
 And growing still in stature the grim shape 381
 Towered up between me and the stars, and still,
 For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
 And measured motion like a living thing,
 Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
 And through the silent water stole my way
 Back to the covert of the willow tree ;
 There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—
 And through the meadows homeward went, in grave
 And serious mood ; but after I had seen 390
 That spectacle, for many days, my brain
 Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
 Of unknown modes of being ; o'er my thoughts
 There hung a darkness, call it solitude
 Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
 Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
 Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields ;
 But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
 Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
 By day, and were a trouble to my dreams. 400

SCHOOL-TIME

[Book II, Lines 164-197.]

But, ere nightfall,

When in our pinnace we returned at leisure
 Over the shadowy lake, and to the beach
 Of some small island steered our course with one,
 The Minstrel of the Troop, and left him there,
 And rowed off gently, while he blew his flute
 Alone upon the rock—oh, then, the calm 170
 And dead still water lay upon my mind
 Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky,
 Never before so beautiful, sank down
 Into my heart, and held me like a dream !
 Thus were my sympathies enlarged, and thus
 Daily the common range of visible things
 Grew dear to me ; already I began
 To love the sun ; a boy I loved the sun,
 Not as I since have loved him, as a pledge
 And surety of our earthly life, a light 180
 Which we behold and feel we are alive ;
 Nor for his bounty to so many worlds—
 But for this cause, that I had seen him lay
 His beauty on the morning hills, had seen
 The western mountain touch his setting orb,
 In many a thoughtless hour, when, from excess
 Of happiness, my blood appeared to flow
 For its own pleasure, and I breathed with joy.
 And, from like feelings, humble though intense,
 To patriotic and domestic love 190
 Analogous, the moon to me was dear ;
 For I could dream away my purposes,
 Standing to gaze upon her while she hung
 Midway between the hills, as if she knew
 No other region, but belonged to thee,
 Yea, appertained by a peculiar right
 To thee and thy grey huts, thou one dear Vale !

GROWTH OF A POET'S MIND

[Lines 265-376.]

From early days,
 Beginning not long after that first time
 In which, a Babe, by intercourse of touch
 I held mute dialogues with my Mother's heart,
 I have endeavoured to display the means
 Whereby this infant sensibility, 270
 Great birthright of our being, was in me
 Augmented and sustained. Yet is a path
 More difficult before me ; and I fear
 That in its broken windings we shall need
 The chamois' sinews, and the eagle's wing :
 For now a trouble came into my mind
 From unknown causes. I was left alone
 Seeking the visible world, nor knowing why.
 The props of my affections were removed,
 And yet the building stood, as if sustained 280
 By its own spirit ! All that I beheld
 Was dear, and hence to finer influxes
 The mind lay open, to a more exact
 And close communion. Many are our joys
 In youth, but oh ! what happiness to live
 When every hour brings palpable access
 Of knowledge, when all knowledge is delight,
 And sorrow is not there ! The seasons came,
 And every season wheresoe'er I moved
 Unfolded transitory qualities, 290
 Which, but for this most watchful power of love,
 Had been neglected ; left a register
 Of permanent relations, else unknown.
 Hence life, and change, and beauty, solitude
 More active even than " best society "—
 Society made sweet as solitude
 By silent inobtrusive sympathies,
 And gentle agitations of the mind
 From manifold distinctions, difference
 Perceived in things, where, to the unwatchful eye,

No difference is, and hence, from the same source,
Sublimar joy ; for I would walk alone, 302
Under the quiet stars, and at that time
Have felt whate'er there is of power in sound
To breathe an elevated mood, by form
Or image unprofaned ; and I would stand,
If the night blackened with a coming storm,
Beneath some rock, listening to notes that are
The ghostly language of the ancient earth,
Or make their dim abode in distant winds. 310
Thence did I drink the visionary power ;
And deem not profitless those fleeting moods
Of shadowy exultation : not for this,
That they are kindred to our purer mind
And intellectual life ; but that the soul,
Remembering how she felt, but what she felt
Remembering not, retains an obscure sense
Of possible sublimity, whereto
With growing faculties she doth aspire,
With faculties still growing, feeling still 320
That whatsoever point they gain, they yet
Have something to pursue.

And not alone,
'Mid gloom and tumult, but no less 'mid fair
And tranquil scenes, that universal power
And fitness in the latent qualities
And essences of things, by which the mind
Is moved with feelings of delight, to me
Came strengthened with a superadded soul,
A virtue not its own. My morning walks
Were early ;—oft before the hours of school 330
I travelled round our little lake, five miles
Of pleasant wandering. Happy time ! more dear
For this, that one was by my side, a Friend,
Then passionately loved ; with heart how full
Would he peruse these lines ! For many years
Have since flowed in between us, and, our minds
Both silent to each other, at this time
We live as if those hours had never been.
Nor seldom did I lift our cottage latch

Far earlier, ere one smoke-wreath had risen 340
 From human dwelling, or the vernal thrush
 Was audible ; and sate among the woods
 Alone upon some jutting eminence,
 At the first gleam of dawn-light, when the Vale,
 Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude.
 How shall I seek the origin ? where find
 Faith in the marvellous things which then I felt ?
 Oft in these moments such a holy calm
 Would overspread my soul, that bodily eyes
 Were utterly forgotten, and what I saw 350
 Appeared like something in myself, a dream,
 A prospect in the mind.

'Twere long to tell
 What spring and autumn, what the winter snows,
 And what the summer shade, what day and night,
 Evening and morning, sleep and waking, thought
 From sources inexhaustible, poured forth
 To feed the spirit of religious love
 In which I walked with Nature. But let this
 Be not forgotten, that I still retained
 My first creative sensibility ; 360
 That by the regular action of the world
 My soul was unsubdued. A plastic power
 Abode with me ; a forming hand, at times
 Rebellious, acting in a devious mood ;
 A local spirit of his own, at war
 With general tendency, but, for the most,
 Subservient strictly to external things
 With which it communed. An auxiliar light
 Came from my mind, which on the setting sun
 Bestowed new splendour ; the melodious birds, 370
 The fluttering breezes, fountains that run on
 Murmuring so sweetly in themselves, obeyed
 A like dominion, and the midnight storm
 Grew darker in the presence of my eye :
 Hence my obeisance, my devotion hence,
 And hence my transport.

THE CLOSE OF BOYHOOD

[Lines 396-451.]

Thus while the days flew by, and years passed on,
 From Nature and her overflowing soul
 I had received so much, that all my thoughts
 Were steeped in feeling ; I was only then
 Contented, when with bliss ineffable 400
 I felt the sentiment of Being spread
 O'er all that moves and all that seemeth still ;
 O'er all that, lost beyond the reach of thought
 And human knowledge, to the human eye
 Invisible, yet liveth to the heart ;
 O'er all that leaps and runs, and shouts and sings,
 Or beats the gladsome air ; o'er all that glides
 Beneath the wave, yea, in the wave itself,
 And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not
 If high the transport, great the joy I felt 410
 Communing in this sort through earth and heaven
 With every form of creature, as it looked
 Towards the Uncreated with a countenance
 Of adoration, with an eye of love.
 One song they sang, and it was audible,
 Most audible, then, when the fleshly ear,
 O'ercome by humblest prelude of that strain,
 Forgot her functions, and slept undisturbed.

If this be error, and another faith
 Find easier access to the pious mind, 420
 Yet were I grossly destitute of all
 Those human sentiments that make this earth
 So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice
 To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye lakes
 And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds
 That dwell among the hills where I was born.
 If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
 If, mingling with the world, I am content
 With my own modest pleasures, and have lived
 With God and Nature communing, removed 430

From little enmities and low desires,
 The gift is yours ; if in these times of fear
 This melancholy waste of hopes o'erthrown,
 If, 'mid indifference and apathy,
 And wicked exultation when good men
 On every side fall off, we know not how,
 To selfishness, disguised in gentle names
 Of peace and quiet and domestic love,
 Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers
 On visionary minds ; if, in this time 440
 Of dereliction and dismay, I yet
 Despair not of our nature, but retain
 A more than Roman confidence, a faith
 That fails not, in all sorrow my support,
 The blessing of my life ; the gift is yours,
 Ye winds and sounding cataracts ! 'tis yours,
 Ye mountains ! thine, O Nature ! Thou hast fed
 My lofty speculations ; and in thee,
 For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
 A never-failing principle of joy 450
 And purest passion.

AT CAMBRIDGE

[Book III, lines 91-166.]

Ofttimes did I quit
 My comrades, leave the crowd, buildings and groves,
 And as I paced alone the level fields
 Far from those lovely sights and sounds sublime
 With which I had been conversant, the mind
 Drooped not ; but there into herself returning,
 With prompt rebound seemed fresh as heretofore.
 At least I more distinctly recognised
 Her native instincts : let me dare to speak
 A higher language, say that now I felt 100
 What independent solaces were mine,
 To mitigate the injurious sway of place
 Or circumstance, how far soever changed
 In youth, or to be changed in after years.

As if awakened, summoned, roused, constrained,
I looked for universal things ; perused
The common countenance of earth and sky :
Earth, nowhere unembellished by some trace
Of that first Paradise whence man was driven ;
And sky, whose beauty and bounty are expressed
By the proud name she bears—the name of Heaven.
I called on both to teach me what they might ; 112
Or turning the mind in upon herself,
Pored, watched, expected, listened, spread my
thoughts

And spread them with a wider creeping ; felt
Incumbencies more awful, visitings
Of the Upholder of the tranquil soul,
That tolerates the indignities of Time,
And, from the centre of Eternity
All finite motions overruling, lives 120

In glory immutable. But peace ! enough
Here to record that I was mounting now
To such community with highest truth—
A track pursuing, not untrod before,
From strict analogies by thought supplied
Or consciousnesses not to be subdued.
To every natural form, rock, fruit, or flower,
Even the loose stones that cover the highway,
I gave a moral life : I saw them feel,
Or linked them to some feeling : the great mass
Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all 131
That I beheld respired with inward meaning.

Add that whate'er of Terror or of Love
Or Beauty, Nature's daily face put on
From transitory passion, unto this
I was as sensitive as waters are
To the sky's influence in a kindred mood
Of passion ; was obedient as a lute
That waits upon the touches of the wind.
Unknown, unthought of, yet I was most rich— 140
I had a world about me—'twas my own ;
I made it, for it only lived to me,
And to the God who sees into the heart.

Such sympathies, though rarely, were betrayed
 By outward gestures and by visible looks :
 Some called it madness—so indeed it was,
 If child-like fruitfulness in passing joy,
 If steady moods of thoughtfulness matured
 To inspiration, sort with such a name ;
 If prophecy be madness ; if things viewed 150
 By poets in old time, and higher up
 By the first men, earth's first inhabitants,
 May in these tutored days no more be seen
 With undisordered sight. But leaving this,
 It was no madness, for the bodily eye
 Amid my strongest workings evermore
 Was searching out the lines of difference
 As they lie hid in all external forms,
 Near or remote, minute or vast ; an eye
 Which, from a tree, a stone, a withered leaf, 160
 To the broad ocean and the azure heavens
 Spangled with kindred multitudes of stars,
 Could find no surface where its power might sleep ;
 Which spake perpetual logic to my soul,
 And by an unrelenting agency
 Did bind my feelings even as in a chain.

A DEDICATED SPIRIT

[Book IV, lines 297-338.]

Yes, that heartless chase
 Of trivial pleasures was a poor exchange
 For books and nature at that early age.
 'Tis true, some casual knowledge might be gained
 Of character or life ; but at that time, 301
 Of manners put to school I took small note,
 And all my deeper passions lay elsewhere.
 Far better had it been to exalt the mind
 By solitary study, to uphold
 Intense desire through meditative peace ;
 And yet, for chastisement of these regrets,
 The memory of one particular hour,

Doth here rise up against me. 'Mid a throng
 Of maids and youths, old men, and matrons staid,
 A medley of all tempers, I had passed 311
 The night in dancing, gaiety, and mirth,
 With din of instruments and shuffling feet,
 And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,
 And unaimed prattle flying up and down ;
 Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there
 Slight shocks of young love-liking interspersed,
 Whose transient pleasure mounted to the head,
 And tingled through the veins. Ere we retired,
 The cock had crowed, and now the eastern sky 320
 Was kindling, not unseen, from humble copse
 And open field, through which the pathway wound,
 And homeward led my steps. Magnificent
 The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
 Glorious as e'er I had beheld—in front,
 The sea lay laughing at a distance ; near,
 The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,
 Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light ;
 And in the meadows and the lower grounds
 Was all the sweetness of a common dawn— 330
 Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
 And labourers going forth to till the fields.
 Ah ! need I say, dear Friend ! that to the brim
 My heart was full ; I made no vows, but vows
 Were then made for me ; bond unknown to me
 Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
 A dedicated Spirit. On I walked
 In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

“AN APPROPRIATE HUMAN CENTRE”

[Lines 354 to end.]

When from our better selves we have too long
 Been parted by the hurrying world, and droop,
 Sick of its business, of its pleasures tired,
 How gracious, how benign, is Solitude ;
 How potent a mere image of her sway ;

Most potent when impressed upon the mind
 With an appropriate human centre—hermit, 360
 Deep in the bosom of the wilderness ;
 Votary (in vast cathedral, where no foot
 Is treading, where no other face is seen)
 Kneeling at prayers ; or watchman on the top
 Of lighthouse, beaten by Atlantic waves ;
 Or as the soul of that great Power is met
 Sometimes embodied on a public road,
 When, for the night deserted, it assumes
 A character of quiet more profound
 Than pathless wastes.

Once, when those summer months 370
 Were flown, and autumn brought its annual show
 Of oars with oars contending, sails with sails,
 Upon Winander's spacious breast, it chanced
 That—after I had left a flower-decked room
 (Whose in-door pastime, lighted up, survived
 To a late hour), and spirits overwrought
 Were making night do penance for a day
 Spent in a round of strenuous idleness—
 My homeward course led up a long ascent,
 Where the road's watery surface, to the top 380
 Of that sharp rising, glittered to the moon
 And bore the semblance of another stream
 Stealing with silent lapse to join the brook
 That murmured in the vale. All else was still ;
 No living thing appeared in earth or air,
 And, save the flowing water's peaceful voice,
 Sound there was none,—but, lo ! an uncouth shape,
 Shown by a sudden turning of the road,
 So near that, slipping back into the shade
 Of a thick hawthorn, I could mark him well, 390
 Myself unseen. He was of stature tall,
 A span above man's common measure, tall,
 Stiff, lank, and upright ; a more meagre man
 Was never seen before by night or day.
 Long were his arms, pallid his hands ; his mouth
 Looked ghastly in the moonlight : from behind,
 A mile-stone propped him ; I could also ken

That he was clothed in military garb,
 Though faded, yet entire. Companionless,
 No dog attending, by no staff sustained, 400
 He stood, and in his very dress appeared
 A desolation, a simplicity,
 To which the trappings of a gaudy world
 Make a strange back-ground. From his lips, ere long,
 Issued low muttered sounds, as if of pain
 Or some uneasy thought ; yet still his form
 Kept the same awful steadiness—at his feet
 His shadow lay, and moved not. From self-blame
 Not wholly free, I watched him thus ; at length
 Subduing my heart's specious cowardice, 410
 I left the shady nook where I had stood
 And hailed him. Slowly from his resting-place
 He rose, and with a lean and wasted arm
 In measured gesture lifted to his head
 Returned my salutation ; then resumed
 His station as before ; and when I asked
 His history, the veteran, in reply,
 Was neither slow nor eager ; but, unmoved,
 And with a quiet, uncomplaining voice,
 A stately air of mild indifference, 420
 He told in few plain words a soldier's tale—
 That in the Tropic Islands he had served,
 Whence he had landed scarcely three weeks past ;
 That on his landing he had been dismissed,
 And now was travelling towards his native home.
 This heard, I said, in pity, “Come with me.”
 He stooped, and straightway from the ground took up
 An oaken staff by me yet unobserved—
 A staff which must have dropt from his slack hand
 And lay till now neglected in the grass. 430
 Though weak his step and cautious, he appeared
 To travel without pain, and I beheld,
 With an astonishment but ill suppressed,
 His ghostly figure moving at my side ;
 Nor could I, while we journeyed thus, forbear
 To turn from present hardships to the past,
 And speak of war, battle, and pestilence,

Sprinkling this talk with questions, better spared,
On what he might himself have seen or felt.

He all the while was in demeanour calm, 440

Concise in answer ; solemn and sublime

He might have seemed, but that in all he said

There was a strange half-absence, as of one

Knowing too well the importance of his theme,

But feeling it no longer. Our discourse

Soon ended, and together on we passed

In silence through a wood gloomy and still.

Up-turning, then, along an open field,

We reached a cottage. At the door I knocked,

And earnestly to charitable care 450

Commended him as a poor friendless man,

Belated and by sickness overcome.

Assured that now the traveller would repose

In comfort, I entreated that henceforth

He would not linger in the public ways,

But ask for timely furtherance and help

Such as his state required. At this reproof,

With the same ghastly mildness in his look,

He said, " My trust is in the God of Heaven,

And in the eye of him who passes me !" 460

The cottage door was speedily unbarred,

And now the soldier touched his hat once more

With his lean hand, and in a faltering voice,

Whose tone bespoke reviving interests

Till then unfelt, he thanked me ; I returned

The farewell blessing of the patient man,

And so we parted. Back I cast a look,

And lingered near the door a little space,

Then sought with quiet heart my distant home.

"MAN ENNOBLED OUTWARDLY"

[Book VIII, lines 215-339.]

Hail to you

Moors, mountains, headlands, and ye hollow vales,

Ye long deep channels for the Atlantic's voice,

Powers of my native region ! Ye that seize

The heart with firmer grasp ! Your snows and
streams

Ungovernable, and your terrifying winds, 220

That howl so dismally for him who treads

Companionless your awful solitudes !

There, 'tis the shepherd's task the winter long

To wait upon the storms : of their approach

Sagacious, into sheltering coves he drives

His flock, and thither from the homestead bears

A toilsome burden up the craggy ways,

And deals it out, their regular nourishment

Strewn on the frozen snow. And when the spring

Looks out, and all the pastures dance with lambs,

And when the flock, with warmer weather, climbs

Higher and higher, him his office leads 232

To watch their goings, whatsoever track

The wanderers choose. For this he quits his home

At day-spring, and no sooner doth the sun

Begin to strike him with a fire-like heat,

Than he lies down upon some shining rock,

And breakfasts with his dog. When they have
stolen,

As is their wont, a pittance from strict time,

For rest not needed or exchange of love, 240

Then from his couch he starts ; and now his feet

Crush out a livelier fragrance from the flowers

Of lowly thyme, by Nature's skill enwrought

In the wild turf : the lingering dews of morn

Smoke round him, as from hill to hill he hies,

His staff protending like a hunter's spear,

Or by its aid leaping from crag to crag,

And o'er the brawling beds of unbridged streams.

Philosophy, methinks, at Fancy's call, 249

Might deign to follow him through what he does

Or sees in his day's march ; himself he feels,

In those vast regions where his service lies,

A freeman, wedded to his life of hope

And hazard, and hard labour interchanged

With that majestic indolence so dear

To native man. A rambling schoolboy, thus

I felt his presence in his own domain,
 As of a lord and master, or a power,
 Or genius, under Nature, under God,
 Presiding ; and severest solitude 269
 Had more commanding looks when he was there.
 When up the lonely brooks on rainy days
 Angling I went, or trod the trackless hills
 By mists bewildered, suddenly mine eyes
 Have glanced upon him distant a few steps,
 In size a giant, stalking through thick fog,
 His sheep like Greenland bears ; or, as he stepped
 Beyond the boundary line of some hill-shadow,
 His form hath flashed upon me, glorified
 By the deep radiance of the setting sun : 270
 Or him have I descried in distant sky,
 A solitary object and sublime,
 Above all height ! like an aerial cross
 Stationed alone upon a spiry rock
 Of the Chartreuse, for worship. Thus was man
 Ennobled outwardly before my sight,
 And thus my heart was early introduced
 To an unconscious love and reverence
 Of human nature ; hence the human form
 To me became an index of delight, 280
 Of grace and honour, power and worthiness.
 Meanwhile this creature—spiritual almost
 As those of books, but more exalted far ;
 Far more of an imaginative form
 Than the gay Corin of the groves, who lives
 For his own fancies, or to dance by the hour,
 In coronal, with Phyllis in the midst—
 Was, for the purposes of kind, a man
 With the most common ; husband, father ; learned,
 Could teach, admonish ; suffered with the rest
 From vice and folly, wretchedness and fear ; 291
 Of this I little saw, cared less for it,
 But something must have felt.

Call ye these appearances—
 Which I behold of shepherds in my youth,
 This sanctity of Nature given to man—

A shadow, a delusion, ye who pore
 On the dead letter, miss the spirit of things ;
 Whose truth is not a motion or a shape
 Instinct with vital functions, but a block
 Or waxen image which yourselves have made,
 And ye adore ! But blessèd be the God 301
 Of Nature and of Man that this was so ;
 That men before my inexperienced eyes
 Did first present themselves thus purified,
 Removed, and to a distance that was fit :
 And so we all of us in some degree
 Are led to knowledge, wheresoever led,
 And howsoever ; were it otherwise,
 And we found evil fast as we find good
 In our first years, or think that it is found, 310
 How could the innocent heart bear up and live !
 But doubly fortunate my lot ; not here
 Alone, that something of a better life
 Perhaps was round me than it is the privilege
 Of most to move in, but that first I looked
 At man through objects that were great or fair ;
 First communed with him by their help. And thus
 Was founded a sure safeguard and defence
 Against the weight of meanness, selfish cares,
 Coarse manners, vulgar passions, that beat in 320
 On all sides from the ordinary world
 In which we traffic. Starting from this point
 I had my face turned toward the truth, began
 With an advantage furnished by that kind
 Of prepossession, without which the soul
 Receives no knowledge that can bring forth good,
 No genuine insight ever comes to her.
 From the restraint of over-watchful eyes
 Preserved, I moved about, year after year,
 Happy, and now most thankful that my walk 330
 Was guarded from too early intercourse
 With the deformities of crowded life,
 And those ensuing laughters and contempts,
 Self-pleasing, which, if we would wish to think
 With a due reverence on earth's rightful lord,

Here placed to be the inheritor of heaven,
Will not permit us ; but pursue the mind,
That to devotion willingly would rise,
Into the temple and the temple's heart.

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THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

[Book X, lines 236-283.]

Twice had the trees let fall
Their leaves, as often Winter had put on
His hoary crown, since I had seen the surge
Beat against Albion's shore, since ear of mine
Had caught the accents of my native speech 240
Upon our native country's sacred ground.
A patriot of the world, how could I glide
Into communion with her sylvan shades,
Erewhile my tuneful haunt ? It pleased me more
To abide in the great City, where I found
The general air still busy with the stir
Of that first memorable onset made
By a strong levy of humanity
Upon the traffickers in Negro blood ;
Effort which, though defeated, had recalled 250
To notice old forgotten principles,
And through the nation spread a novel heat
Of virtuous feeling. For myself, I own
That this particular strife had wanted power
To rivet my affections ; nor did now
Its unsuccessful issue much excite
My sorrow ; for I brought with me the faith
That, if France prospered, good men would not
long
Pay fruitless worship to humanity,
And this most rotten branch of human shame,
Object, so seemed it, of superfluous pains, 261
Would fall together with its parent tree.
What, then, were my emotions, when in arms
Britain put forth her freeborn strength in league,
Oh, pity and shame ! with those confederate Powers !

Not in my single self alone I found,
 But in the minds of all ingenuous youth,
 Change and subversion from that hour. No shock
 Given to my moral nature had I known
 Down to that very moment ; neither lapse 270
 Nor turn of sentiment that might be named
 A revolution, save at this one time ;
 All else was progress on the self-same path
 On which, with a diversity of pace,
 I had been travelling : this a stride at once
 Into another region. As a light
 And pliant harebell, swinging in the breeze
 On some grey rock—its birthplace—so had I
 Wantoned, fast rooted on the ancient tower
 Of my belovèd country, wishing not 280
 A happier fortune than to wither there :
 Now was I from that pleasant station torn
 And tossed about in whirlwind.

THE REIGN OF TERROR

[Lines 374-415.]

Amid the depth
 Of those enormities, even thinking minds
 Forgot, at seasons, whence they had their being ;
 Forgot that such a sound was ever heard
 As Liberty upon earth : yet all beneath
 Her innocent authority was wrought,
 Nor could have been, without her blessèd name.
 The illustrious wife of Roland, in the hour 381
 Of her composure, felt that agony,
 And gave it vent in her last words. O Friend !
 It was a lamentable time for man,
 Whether a hope had e'er been his or not ;
 A woeful time for them whose hopes survived
 The shock ; most woeful for those few who still
 Were flattered, and had trust in human kind :
 They had the deepest feeling of the grief.
 Meanwhile the Invaders fared as they deserved :

The Herculean Commonwealth had put forth her
arms,

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And throttled with an infant godhead's might
The snakes about her cradle ; that was well,
And as it should be ; yet no cure for them
Whose souls were sick with pain of what would be
Hereafter brought in charge against mankind.
Most melancholy at that time, O Friend !
Were my day-thoughts,—my nights were miserable ;
Through months, through years, long after the last
beat

Of those atrocities, the hour of sleep
To me came rarely charged with natural gifts,
Such ghastly visions had I of despair
And tyranny, and implements of death ;
And innocent victims sinking under fear,
And momentary hope, and worn-out prayer,
Each in his separate cell, or penned in crowds
For sacrifice, and struggling with fond mirth
And levity in dungeons, where the dust
Was laid with tears. Then suddenly the scene
Changed, and the unbroken dream entangled me
In long orations, which I strove to plead
Before unjust tribunals,—with a voice
Labouring, a brain confounded, and a sense,
Death-like, of treacherous desertion, felt
In the last place of refuge—my own soul.

400

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WILLIAM AND DOROTHY

[Book XI, lines 321-370.]

Depressed, bewildered thus, I did not walk
With scoffers, seeking light and gay revenge
From indiscriminate laughter, nor sate down
In reconciliation with an utter waste
Of intellect ; such sloth I could not brook,
(Too well I loved, in that my spring of life,
Pains-taking thoughts, and truth, their dear reward
But turned to abstract science, and there sought

Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned
Where the disturbances of space and time— 330
Whether in matters various, properties
Inherent, or from human will and power
Derived—find no admission. Then it was—
Thanks to the bounteous Giver of all good !—
That the belovèd Sister in whose sight
Those days were passed, now speaking in a voice
Of sudden admonition—like a brook
That did but *cross* a lonely road, and now
Is seen, heard, felt, and caught at every turn,
Companion never lost through many a league—
Maintained for me a saving intercourse 341
With my true self ; for, though bedimmed and
changed

Much, as it seemed, I was no further changed
Than as a clouded and a waning moon :
She whispered still that brightness would return,
She, in the midst of all, preserved me still
A Poet, made me seek beneath that name,
And that alone, my office upon earth ;
And, lastly, as hereafter will be shown,
If willing audience fail not, Nature's self, 350
By all varieties of human love
Assisted, led me back through opening day
To those sweet counsels between head and heart
Whence grew that genuine knowledge, fraught with
peace,

Which, through the later sinkings of this cause,
Hath still upheld me, and upholds me now
In the catastrophe (for so they dream,
And nothing less), when, finally to close
And seal up all the gains of France, a Pope
Is summoned in to crown an Emperor— 360
This last opprobrium, when we see a people,
That once looked up in faith, as if to Heaven
For manna, take a lesson from the dog
Returning to his vomit ; when the sun
That rose in splendour, was alive, and moved
In exultation with a living pomp

Of clouds—his glory's natural retinue—
 Hath dropped all functions by the gods bestowed,
 And, turned into a gewgaw, a machine,
 Sets like an Opera phantom.

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IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED

[Book XII, lines 1-43, 93 to end.]

Long time have human ignorance and guilt
 Detained us, on what spectacles of woe
 Compelled to look, and inwardly oppressed
 With sorrow, disappointment, vexing thoughts,
 Confusion of the judgement, zeal decayed,
 And, lastly, utter loss of hope itself
 And things to hope for ! Not with these began
 Our song, and not with these our song must end.—
 Ye motions of delight, that haunt the sides
 Of the green hills ; ye breezes and soft airs, 10
 Whose subtle intercourse with breathing flowers,
 Feelingly watched, might teach Man's haughty race
 How without injury to take, to give
 Without offence ; ye who, as if to show
 The wondrous influence of power gently used,
 Bend the complying heads of lordly pines,
 And, with a touch, shift the stupendous clouds
 Through the whole compass of the sky ; ye brooks,
 Muttering along the stones, a busy noise
 By day, a quiet sound in silent night ; 20
 Ye waves, that out of the great deep steal forth
 In a calm hour to kiss the pebbly shore,
 Not mute, and then retire, fearing no storm ;
 And you, ye groves, whose ministry it is
 To interpose the covert of your shades,
 Even as a sleep, between the heart of man
 And outward troubles, between man himself,
 Not seldom, and his own uneasy heart :
 Oh ! that I had a music and a voice
 Harmonious as your own that I might tell 30

What ye have done for me. The morning shines,
Nor heedeth Man's perverseness ; Spring returns,—
I saw the Spring return, and could rejoice,
In common with the children of her love,
Piping on boughs, or sporting on fresh fields,
Or boldly seeking pleasure nearer heaven
On wings that navigate cerulean skies.
So neither were complacency, nor peace,
Nor tender yearnings, wanting for my good
Through these distracted times ; in Nature still
Glorying, I found a counterpoise in her, 41
Which, when the spirit of evil reached its height,
Maintained for me a secret happiness. . . .

O Soul of Nature ! excellent and fair !
That didst rejoice with me, with whom I, too,
Rejoiced through early youth, before the winds
And roaring waters, and in lights and shades
That marched and countermarched about the hills
In glorious apparition, Powers on whom
I daily waited, now all eye and now
All ear ; but never long without the heart 100
Employed, and man's unfolding intellect :
O Soul of Nature ! that, by laws divine
Sustained and governed, still dost overflow
With an impassioned life, what feeble ones
Walk on this earth ! how feeble have I been
When thou wert in thy strength ! Nor this through
stroke
Of human suffering, such as justifies
Remissness and inaptitude of mind,
But through presumption ; even in pleasure pleased
Unworthily, disliking here, and there 110
Liking ; by rules of mimic art transferred
To things above all art ; but more,—for this,
Although a strong infection of the age,
Was never much my habit—giving way
To a comparison of scene with scene,
Bent overmuch on superficial things,
Pampering myself with meagre novelties

Of colour and proportion ; to the moods
 Of time and season, to the moral power,
 The affections and the spirit of the place, 120
 Insensible. Nor only did the love
 Of sitting thus in judgement interrupt
 My deeper feelings, but another cause,
 More subtle and less easily explained,
 That almost seems inherent in the creature,
 A twofold frame of body and of mind.
 I speak in recollection of a time
 When the bodily eye, in every stage of life
 The most despotic of our senses, gained
 Such strength in *me* as often held my mind 130
 In absolute dominion. Gladly here,
 Entering upon abstruser argument,
 Could I endeavour to unfold the means
 Which Nature studiously employs to thwart
 This tyranny, summons all the senses each
 To counteract the other, and themselves,
 And makes them all, and the objects with which all
 Are conversant, subservient in their turn
 To the great ends of Liberty and Power.
 But leave we this : enough that my delights 140
 (Such as they were) were sought insatiably.
 Vivid the transport, vivid though not profound ;
 I roamed from hill to hill, from rock to rock,
 Still craving combinations of new forms,
 New pleasure, wider empire for the sight,
 Proud of her own endowments, and rejoiced
 To lay the inner faculties asleep.
 Amid the turns and counterturns, the strife
 And various trials of our complex being,
 As we grow up, such thralldom of that sense 150
 Seems hard to shun. And yet I knew a maid,
 A young enthusiast, who escaped these bonds ;
 Her eye was not the mistress of her heart ;
 Far less did rules prescribed by passive taste,
 Or barren intermeddling subtleties,
 Perplex her mind ; but, wise as women are
 When genial circumstance hath favoured them,

She welcomed what was given, and craved no more ;
Whate'er the scene presented to her view
That was the best, to that she was attuned 160
By her benign simplicity of life,
And through a perfect happiness of soul,
Whose variegated feelings were in this
Sisters, that they were each some new delight.
Birds in the bower, and lambs in the green field,
Could they have known her, would have loved ; mo-
thought
Her very presence such a sweetness breathed,
That flowers, and trees, and even the silent hills,
And everything she looked on, should have had
An intimation how she bore herself 170
Towards them and to all creatures. God delights
In such a being ; for, her common thoughts
Are piety, her life is gratitude.

Even like this maid, before I was called forth
From the retirement of my native hills,
I loved whate'er I saw : nor lightly loved,
But most intensely ; never dreamt of aught
More grand, more fair, more exquisitely framed
Than those few nooks to which my happy feet
Were limited. I had not at that time 180
Lived long enough, nor in the least survived
The first diviner influence of this world,
As it appears to unaccustomed eyes.
Worshipping then among the depth of things,
As piety ordained ; could I submit
To measured admiration, or to aught
That should preclude humility and love ?
I felt, observed, and pondered ; did not judge,
Yea, never thought of judging ; with the gift
Of all this glory filled and satisfied. 190
And afterwards, when through the gorgeous Alps
Roaming, I carried with me the same heart :
In truth, the degradation—howsoe'er
Induced, effect, in whatsoe'er degree,
Of custom that prepares a partial scale

In which the little oft outweighs the great ;
 Or any other cause that hath been named ;
 Or lastly, aggravated by the times
 And their impassioned sounds, which well might make
 The milder minstrelsies of rural scenes 200
 Inaudible—was transient ; I had known
 Too forcibly, too early in my life,
 Visitings of imaginative power
 For this to last : I shook the habit off
 Entirely and for ever, and again
 In Nature's presence stood, as now I stand,
 A sensitive being, a *creative* soul.

There are in our existence spots of time,
 That with distinct pre-eminence retain
 A renovating virtue, whence, depressed 210
 By false opinion and contentious thought,
 Or aught of heavier or more deadly weight,
 In trivial occupations, and the round
 Of ordinary intercourse, our minds
 Are nourished and invisibly repaired ;
 A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,
 That penetrates, enables us to mount,
 When high, more high, and lifts us up when fallen.
 This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks
 Among those passages of life that give 220
 Profoundest knowledge to what point, and how,
 The mind is lord and master—outward sense
 The obedient servant of her will. Such moments
 Are scattered everywhere, taking their date
 From our first childhood. I remember well,
 That once, while yet my inexperienced hand
 Could scarcely hold a bridle, with proud hopes
 I mounted, and we journeyed towards the hills :
 An ancient servant of my father's house
 Was with me, my encourager and guide : 230
 We had not travelled long, ere some mischance
 Disjoined me from my comrade ;—and, through fear
 Dismounting, down the rough and stony moor
 I led my horse, and, stumbling on, at length

Came to a bottom, where in former times
A murderer had been hung in iron chains.
The gibbet-mast had mouldered down, the bones
And iron case were gone ; but on the turf,
Hard by, soon after that fell deed was wrought,
Some unknown hand had carved the murderer's
name. 240

The monumental letters were inscribed
In times long past ; but still, from year to year, .
By superstition of the neighbourhood,
The grass is cleared away, and to this hour
The characters are fresh and visible :
A casual glance had shown them, and I fled,
Faltering and faint, and ignorant of the road :
Then, reascending the bare common, saw
A naked pool that lay beneath the hills,
The beacon on the summit, and, more near, 250
A girl, who bore a pitcher on her head,
And seemed with difficult steps to force her way
Against the blowing wind. It was, in truth,
An ordinary sight ; but I should need
Colours and words that are unknown to man,
To paint the visionary dreariness
Which, while I looked all round for my lost guide,
Invested moorland waste, and naked pool,
The beacon crowning the lone eminence, 259
The female and her garments vexed and tossed
By the strong wind. When, in the blessed hours
Of early love, the loved one at my side,
I roamed, in daily presence of this scene,
Upon the naked pool and dreary crags,
And on the melancholy beacon, fell
A spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam ;
And think ye not with radiance more sublime
For these remembrances, and for the power
They had left behind ? So feeling comes in aid
Of feeling, and diversity of strength 270
Attends us, if but once we have been strong.
Oh ! mystery of man, from what a depth
Proceed thy honours. I am lost, but see

In simple childhood something of the base
 On which thy greatness stands ; but this I feel,
 That from thyself it comes, that thou must give,
 Else never canst receive. The days gone by
 Return upon me almost from the dawn
 Of life : the hiding-places of man's power
 Open ; I would approach them, but they close.
 I see by glimpses now ; when age comes on, 281
 May scarcely see at all ; and I would give,
 While yet we may, as far as words can give,
 Substance and life to what I feel, enshrining,
 Such is my hope, the spirit of the Past
 For future restoration.—Yet another
 Of these memorials :—

One Christmas-time,
 On the glad eve of its dear holidays,
 Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went forth
 Into the fields, impatient for the sight 290
 Of those led palfreys that should bear us home ;
 My brothers and myself. There rose a crag,
 That, from the meeting-point of two highways
 Ascending, overlooked them both, far stretched ;
 Thither, uncertain on which road to fix
 My expectation, thither I repaired,
 Scout-like, and gained the summit ; 'twas a day
 Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the grass
 I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall ;
 Upon my right hand couched a single sheep, 300
 Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood ;
 With those companions at my side, I watched,
 Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist
 Gave intermitting prospect of the copse
 And plain beneath. Ere we to school returned,—
 That dreary time,—ere we had been ten days
 Sojourners in my father's house, he died,
 And I and my three brothers, orphans then,
 Followed his body to the grave. The event,
 With all the sorrow that it brought, appeared 310
 A chastisement ; and when I called to mind
 That day so lately past, when from the crag

I looked in such anxiety of hope ;
 With trite reflections of morality,
 Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low
 To God, Who thus corrected my desires ;
 And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain,
 And all the business of the elements,
 The single sheep, and the one blasted tree, 319
 And the bleak music from that old stone wall,
 The noise of wood and water, and the mist
 That on the line of each of those two roads
 Advanced in such indisputable shapes ;
 All these were kindred spectacles and sounds
 To which I oft repaired, and thence would drink,
 As at a fountain ; and on winter nights,
 Down to this very time, when storm and rain
 Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,
 While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,
 Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock 330
 In a strong wind, some working of the spirit,
 Some inward agitations thence are brought,
 Whate'er their office, whether to beguile
 Thoughts over busy in the course they took,
 Or animate an hour of vacant ease.

IMAGINATION AND TASTE, HOW IMPAIRED AND RESTORED.—(CONCLUDED.)

[Book XIII, lines 106–278.]

The time
 Had never been when throes of mighty Nations
 And the world's tumult unto me could yield,
 How far soe'er transported and possessed,
 Full measure of content ; but still I craved 110
 An intermingling of distinct regards
 And truths of individual sympathy
 Nearer ourselves. Such often might be gleaned
 From the great City, else it must have proved
 To me a heart-depressing wilderness ;
 But much was wanting : therefore did I turn

To you, ye pathways, and ye lonely roads ;
 Sought you enriched with everything I prized,
 With human kindnesses and simple joys.

Oh ! next to one dear state of bliss, vouchsafed
 Alas ! to few in this untoward world. 121
 The bliss of walking daily in life's prime
 Through field or forest with the maid we love,
 While yet our hearts are young, while yet we
 breathe

Nothing but happiness, in some lone nook,
 Deep vale, or anywhere, the home of both,
 From which it would be misery to stir :
 Oh ! next to such enjoyment of our youth,
 In my esteem, next to such dear delight, 129
 Was that of wandering on from day to day
 Where I could meditate in peace, and cull
 Knowledge that step by step might lead me on
 To wisdom ; or, as lightsome as a bird
 Wafted upon the wind from distant lands,
 Sing notes of greeting to strange fields or groves,
 Which lacked not voice to welcome me in turn :
 And, when that pleasant toil had ceased to please,
 Converse with men, where if we meet a face
 We almost meet a friend, on naked heaths 139
 With long long ways before, by cottage bench,
 Or well-spring where the weary traveller rests.

Who doth not love to follow with his eye
 The windings of a public way ? the sight,
 Familiar object as it is, hath wrought
 On my imagination since the morn
 Of childhood, when a disappearing line,
 One daily present to my eyes, that crossed
 The naked summit of a far-off hill
 Beyond the limits that my feet had trod,
 Was like an invitation into space 150
 Boundless, or guide into eternity.
 Yes, something of the grandeur which invests
 The mariner who sails the roaring sea

Through storm and darkness, early in my mind
Surrounded, too, the wanderers of the earth ;
Grandeur as much, and loveliness far more.
Awed have I been by strolling Bedlamites ;
From many other uncouth vagrants (passed
In fear) have walked with quicker step ; but why
Take note of this ? When I began to enquire,
To watch and question those I met, and speak
Without reserve to them, the lonely roads 162
Were open schools in which I daily read
With most delight the passions of mankind,
Whether by words, looks, sighs, or tears, revealed ;
There saw into the depth of human souls,
Souls that appear to have no depth at all
To careless eyes. And—now convinced at heart
How little those formalities, to which
With overweening trust alone we give 170
The name of Education, have to do
With real feeling and just sense ; how vain
A correspondence with the talking world
Proves to the most ; and called to make good search
If man's estate, by doom of Nature yoked
With toil, be therefore yoked with ignorance ;
If virtue be indeed so hard to rear,
And intellectual strength so rare a boon—
I prized such walks still more, for there I found
Hope to my hope, and to my pleasure peace
And steadiness, and healing and repose 181
To every angry passion. There I heard,
From mouths of men obscure and lowly, truths
Replete with honour ; sounds in unison
With loftiest promises of good and fair.

There are who think that strong affection, love
Known by whatever name, is falsely deemed
A gift, to use a term which they would use,
Of vulgar nature ; that its growth requires
Retirement, leisure, language purified 190
By manners studied and elaborate ;
That whoso feels such passion in its strength

Must live within the very light and air
 Of courteous usages refined by art.
 True is it, where oppression worse than death
 Salutes the being at his birth, where grace
 Of culture hath been utterly unknown,
 And poverty and labour in excess
 From day to day pre-occupy the ground
 Of the affections, and to Nature's self 200
 Oppose a deeper nature ; there, indeed,
 Love cannot be ; nor does it thrive with ease
 Among the close and overcrowded haunts
 Of cities, where the human heart is sick,
 And the eye feeds it not, and cannot feed.
 —Yes, in those wanderings deeply did I feel
 How we mislead each other ; above all,
 How books mislead us, seeking their reward
 From judgements of the wealthy Few, who see
 By artificial lights ; how they debase 210
 The Many for the pleasure of those Few ;
 Effeminately level down the truth
 To certain general notions, for the sake
 Of being understood at once, or else
 Through want of better knowledge in the heads
 That framed them ; flattering self-conceit with
 words,
 That, while they most ambitiously set forth
 Extrinsic differences, the outward marks
 Whereby society has parted man
 From man, neglect the universal heart. 220

Here, calling up to mind what then I saw,
 A youthful traveller, and see daily now
 In the familiar circuit of my home,
 Here might I pause, and bend in reverence
 To Nature, and the power of human minds,
 To men as they are men within themselves.
 How oft high service is performed within,
 When all the external man is rude in show,—
 Not like a temple rich with pomp and gold,
 But a mere mountain-chapel, that protects 230

Its simple worshippers from sun and shower.
Of these, said I, shall be my song ; of these,
If future years mature me for the task,
Will I record the praises, making verse
Deal boldly with substantial things ; in truth
And sanctity of passion, speak of these,
That justice may be done, obeisance paid
Where it is due : thus haply shall I teach,
Inspire ; through unadulterated ears
Pour rapture, tenderness, and hope,—my theme
No other than the very heart of man, 241
As found among the best of those who live—
Not unexalted by religious faith,
Nor uninformed by books, good books, though
few—

In Nature's presence : thence may I select
Sorrow, that is not sorrow, but delight ;
And miserable love, that is not pain
To hear of, for the glory that redounds
Therefrom to human kind, and what we are.
Be mine to follow with no timid step 250
Where knowledge leads me : it shall be my pride
That I have dared to tread this holy ground,
Speaking no dream, but things oracular ;
Matter not lightly to be heard by those
Who to the letter of the outward promise
Do read the invisible soul ; by men adroit
In speech, and for communion with the world
Accomplished ; minds whose faculties are then
Most active when they are most eloquent,
And elevated most when most admired. 260
Men may be found of other mould than these,
Who are their own upholders, to themselves
Encouragement, and energy, and will,
Expressing liveliest thoughts in lively words
As native passion dictates. Others, too,
There are among the walks of homely life
Still higher, men for contemplation framed,
Shy, and unpractised in the strife of phrase ;
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink

Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse :
 Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,
 The thought, the image, and the silent joy : 272
 Words are but under-agents in their souls ;
 When they are grasping with their greatest strength,
 They do not breathe among them : this I speak
 In gratitude to God, Who feeds our hearts
 For His own service ; knoweth, loveth us,
 When we are unregarded by the world.

AN ASCENT OF SNOWDON

[Book XIV, lines 11-129.]

It was a close, warm, breezeless summer night,
 Wan, dull, and glaring, with a dripping fog
 Low-hung and thick that covered all the sky ;
 But, undiscouraged, we began to climb
 The mountain-side. The mist soon girt us round,
 And, after ordinary travellers' talk
 With our conductor, pensively we sank
 Each into commerce with his private thoughts :
 Thus did we breast the ascent, and by myself
 Was nothing either seen or heard that checked 20
 Those musings or diverted, save that once
 The shepherd's lurcher, who, among the crags,
 Had to his joy unearthed a hedgehog, teased
 His coiled-up prey with barkings turbulent.
 This small adventure, for even such it seemed
 In that wild place and at the dead of night,
 Being over and forgotten, on we wound
 In silence as before. With forehead bent
 Earthward, as if in opposition set
 Against an enemy, I panted up 30
 With eager pace, and no less eager thoughts.
 Thus might we wear a midnight hour away,
 Ascending at loose distance each from each,
 And I, as chanced, the foremost of the band ;
 When at my feet the ground appeared to brighten,
 And with a step or two seemed brighter still ;

Nor was time given to ask or learn the cause,
For instantly a light upon the turf
Fell like a flash, and lo ! as I looked up,
The Moon hung naked in a firmament 40
Of azure without cloud, and at my feet
Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.
A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved
All over this still ocean ; and beyond,
Far, far beyond, the solid vapours stretched,
In headlands, tongues, and promontory shapes,
Into the main Atlantic, that appeared
To dwindle, and give up his majesty,
Usurped upon far as the sight could reach.
Not so the ethereal vault ; encroachment none
Was there, nor loss ; only the inferior stars 51
Had disappeared, or shed a fainter light
In the clear presence of the full-orbed Moon;
Who, from her sovereign elevation, gazed
Upon the billowy ocean, as it lay
All meek and silent, save that through a rift—
Not distant from the shore whereon we stood,
A fixed, abysmal, gloomy breathing-place—
Mounted the roar of waters, torrents, streams
Innumerable, roaring with one voice ! 60
Heard over earth and sea, and, in that hour,
For so it seemed, felt by the starry heavens.

When into air had partially dissolved
That vision, given to spirits of the night
And three chance human wanderers, in calm
thought
Reflected, it appeared to me the type
Of a majestic intellect, its acts
And its possessions, what it has and craves,
What in itself it is, and would become.
There I beheld the emblem of a mind 70
That feeds upon infinity, that broods
Over the dark abyss, intent to hear
Its voices issuing forth to silent light
In one continuous stream ; a mind sustained

By recognitions of transcendent power,
 In sense conducting to ideal form,
 In soul of more than mortal privilege.
 One function, above all, of such a mind
 Had Nature shadowed there, by putting forth,
 'Mid circumstances awful and sublime, 80
 That mutual domination which she loves
 To exert upon the face of outward things,
 So moulded, joined, abstracted, so endowed
 With interchangeable supremacy,
 That men, least sensitive, see, hear, perceive,
 And cannot choose but feel. The power, which all
 Acknowledge when thus moved, which Nature thus
 To bodily sense exhibits, is the express
 Resemblance of that glorious faculty
 That higher minds bear with them as their own.
 This is the very spirit in which they deal 91
 With the whole compass of the universe:
 They from their native selves can send abroad
 Kindred mutations ; for themselves create
 A like existence ; and, whene'er it dawns
 Created for them, catch it, or are caught
 By its inevitable mastery,
 Like angels stopped upon the wing by sound
 Of harmony from Heaven's remotest spheres.
 Them the enduring and the transient both 100
 Serve to exalt ; they build up greatest things
 From least suggestions ; ever on the watch,
 Willing to work and to be wrought upon,
 They need not extraordinary calls
 To rouse them ; in a world of life they live,
 By sensible impressions not enthralled,
 But by their quickening impulse made more
 prompt
 To hold fit converse with the spiritual world,
 And with the generations of mankind
 Spread over time, past, present, and to come,
 Age after age, till Time shall be no more. 111
 Such minds are truly from the Deity,
 For they are Powers ; and hence the highest bliss

That flesh can know is theirs—the consciousness
Of Whom they are, habitually infused
Through every image and through every thought,
And all affections by communion raised
From earth to heaven, from human to divine ;
Hence endless occupation for the Soul,
Whether discursive or intuitive ; 120
Hence cheerfulness for acts of daily life,
Emotions which best foresight need not fear,
Most worthy then of trust when most intense.
Hence, amid ills that vex and wrongs that crush
Our hearts—if here the words of Holy Writ
May with fit reverence be applied—that peace
Which passeth understanding, that repose
In moral judgements which from this pure source
Must come, or will by man be sought in vain.

DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

[Lines 232–275.]

Child of my parents ! Sister of my soul !
Thanks in sincerest verse have been elsewhere
Poured out for all the early tenderness
Which I from thee imbibed : and 'tis most true
That later seasons owed to thee no less ;
For, spite of thy sweet influence and the touch
Of kindred hands that opened out the springs
Of genial thought in childhood, and in spite
Of all that unassisted I had marked 240
In life or nature of those charms minute
That win their way into the heart by stealth,
Still (to the very going-out of youth)
I too exclusively esteemed *that* love,
And sought *that* beauty, which, as Milton sings,
Hath terror in it. Thou didst soften down
This over-sternness ; but for thee, dear Friend !
My soul, too reckless of mild grace, had stood
In her original self too confident,
Retained too long a countenance severe ; 250

A rock with torrents roaring, with the clouds
 Familiar, and a favourite of the stars :
 But thou didst plant its crevices with flowers,
 Hang it with shrubs that twinkle in the breeze,
 And teach the little birds to build their nests
 And warble in its chambers. At a time
 When Nature, destined to remain so long
 Foremost in my affections, had fallen back
 Into a second place, pleased to become
 A handmaid to a nobler than herself, 260
 When every day brought with it some new sense
 Of exquisite regard for common things,
 And all the earth was budding with these gifts
 Of more refined humanity, thy breath,
 Dear Sister ! was a kind of gentler spring
 That went before my steps. Thereafter came
 One whom with thee friendship had early paired ;
 She came, no more a phantom to adorn
 A moment, but an inmate of the heart,
 And yet a spirit, there for me enshrined 270
 To penetrate the lofty and the low ;
 Even as one essence of pervading light
 Shines, in the brightest of ten thousand stars,
 And, the meek worm that feeds her lonely lamp
 Couched in the dewy grass.

TO S. T. C.

[Lines 430 to end.]

Oh ! yet a few short years of useful life, 430
 And all will be complete, thy race be run,
 Thy monument of glory will be raised ;
 Then, though (too weak to tread the ways of truth)
 This age fall back to old idolatry,
 Though men return to servitude as fast
 As the tide ebbs, to ignominy and shame
 By nations sink together, we shall still
 Find solace—knowing what we have learnt to know,
 Rich in true happiness if allowed to be

Faithful alike in forwarding a day 440
Of firmer trust, joint labourers in the work
(Should Providence such grace to us vouchsafe)
Of their deliverance, surely yet to come.
Prophets of Nature, we to them will speak
A lasting inspiration, sanctified
By reason, blest by faith : what we have loved,
Others will love, and we will teach them how ;
Instruct them how the mind of man becomes
A thousand times more beautiful than the earth
On which he dwells, above this frame of things
(Which, 'mid all revolution in the hopes 451
And fears of men, doth still remain unchanged)
In beauty exalted, as it is itself
Of quality and fabric more divine.

FROM "THE RECLUSE," BOOK I

ON Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,
Musing in solitude, I oft perceive
Fair trains of imagery before me rise,
Accompanied by feelings of delight
Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed ;
And I am conscious of affecting thoughts
And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes
Or elevates the Mind, intent to weigh
The good and evil of our mortal state.

—To these emotions, whencesoe'er they come,
Whether from breath of outward circumstance,
Or from the Soul—an impulse to herself—
I would give utterance in numerous verse.
Of Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,
And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith ;
Of blessed consolations in distress ;
Of moral strength, and intellectual Power ;
Of joy in widest commonalty spread ;
Of the individual Mind that keeps her own
Inviolate retirement, subject there
To Conscience only, and the law supreme
Of that Intelligence which governs all—
I sing :—" fit audience let me find though few !"

So prayed, more gaining than he asked, the
Bard—

In holiest mood. Urania, I shall need
Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such
Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven !
For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink

Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil. 30
All strength—all terror, single or in bands,
That ever was put forth in personal form—
Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir
Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal thrones—
I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
By help of dreams—can breed such fear and awe
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man— 40
My haunt, and the main region of my song.
—Beauty—a living Presence of the earth,
Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms
Which craft of delicate Spirits hath composed
From earth's materials—waits upon my steps ;
Pitches her tents before me as I move,
An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves
Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be
A history only of departed things, 50
Or a mere fiction of what never was ?
For the discerning intellect of Man,
When wedded to this goodly universe
In love and holy passion, shall find these
A simple produce of the common day.
—I, long before the blissful hour arrives,
Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
Of this great consummation :—and, by words
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep 60
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain
To noble raptures ; while my voice proclaims
How exquisitely the individual Mind
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less
Of the whole species) to the external World
Is fitted :—and how exquisitely, too—
Theme this but little heard of among men—
The external World is fitted to the Mind ;

And the creation (by no lower name
 Can it be called) which they with blended might
 Accomplish :—this is our high argument. 71
 —Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft
 Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes
 And fellowships of men, and see ill sights
 Of madding passions mutually inflamed ;
 Must hear Humanity in fields and groves
 Pipe solitary anguish ; or must hang
 Brooding above the fierce confederate storm
 Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore 79
 Within the walls of cities—may these sounds
 Have their authentic comment ; that even these
 Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn !—
 Descend, prophetic Spirit ! that inspir'st
 The human Soul of universal earth,
 Dreaming on things to come ; and dost possess
 A metropolitan temple in the hearts
 Of mighty Poets : upon me bestow
 A gift of genuine insight ; that my Song
 With star-like virtue in its place may shine,
 Shedding benignant influence, and secure, 90
 Itself, from all malevolent effect
 Of those mutations that extend their sway
 Throughout the nether sphere !—And if with this
 I mix more lowly matter ; with the thing
 Contemplated, describe the Mind and Man
 Contemplating ; and who, and what he was—
 The transitory Being that beheld
 This Vision ; when and where, and how he lived ;—
 Be not this labour useless. If such theme
 May sort with highest objects, then—dread Power !
 Whose gracious favour is the primal source
 Of all illumination,—may my Life 102
 Express the image of a better time,
 More wise desires, and simpler manners ;—nurse
 My Heart in genuine freedom :—all pure thoughts
 Be with me ;—so shall thy unfailing love
 Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end !

FROM "THE EXCURSION"

THE WANDERER

[Book I, lines 118-243, 340-381.]

FROM his sixth year, the Boy of whom I speak,
In summer, tended cattle on the hills ;
But, through the inclement and the perilous days
Of long-continuing winter, he repaired, 121
Equipped with satchel, to a school, that stood
Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge,
Remote from view of city spire, or sound
Of minster clock ! From that bleak tenement
He, many an evening, to his distant home
In solitude returning, saw the hills
Grow larger in the darkness ; all alone
Beheld the stars come out above his head, 129
And travelled through the wood, with no one near
To whom he might confess the things he saw.

So the foundations of his mind were laid.
In such communion, not from terror free,
While yet a child, and long before his time,
Had he perceived the presence and the power
Of greatness ; and deep feelings had impressed
So vividly great objects that they lay
Upon his mind like substances, whose presence
Perplexed the bodily sense. He had received
A precious gift ; for, as he grew in years, 140
With these impressions would he still compare
All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes, and forms ;
And, being still unsatisfied with aught

Of dimmer character, he thence attained
 An active power to fasten images
 Upon his brain ; and on their pictured lines
 Intensely brooded, even till they acquired
 The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,
 While yet a child, with a child's eagerness
 Incessantly to turn his ear and eye
 On all things which the moving seasons brought
 To feed such appetite—nor this alone
 Appeased his yearning :—in the after-day
 Of boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,
 And 'mid the hollow depths of naked crags
 He sate, and even in their fixed lineaments,
 Or from the power of a peculiar eye,
 Or by creative feeling overborne,
 Or by predominance of thought oppressed,
 Even in their fixed and steady lineaments
 He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind,
 Expression ever varying !

Thus informed,
 He had small need of books ; for many a tale
 Traditionary round the mountains hung,
 And many a legend, peopling the dark woods,
 Nourished Imagination in her growth,
 And gave the Mind that apprehensive power
 By which she is made quick to recognise
 The moral properties and scope of things.
 But eagerly he read, and read again,
 Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied ;
 The life and death of martyrs, who sustained,
 With will inflexible, those fearful pangs
 Triumphantly displayed in records left
 Of persecution, and the Covenant—times
 Whose echo rings through Scotland to this hour !
 And there, by lucky hap, had been preserved
 A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,
 That left half-told the preternatural tale,
 Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends,
 Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts
 Strange and uncouth ; dire faces, figures dire,

Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-ankled too,
 With long and ghostly shanks—forms which once
 seen

Could never be forgotten !

In his heart,

Where Fear sate thus, a cherished visitant,
 Was wanting yet the pure delight of love
 By sound diffused, or by the breathing air,
 Or by the silent looks of happy things,
 Or flowing from the universal face
 Of earth and sky. But he had felt the power
 Of Nature, and already was prepared,
 By his intense conceptions, to receive
 Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,
 Whom Nature, by whatever means, has taught
 To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

190

Such was the Boy—but for the growing Youth
 What soul was his, when, from the naked top
 Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun
 Rise up, and bathe the world in light ! He looked—
 Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
 And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay
 Beneath him :—Far and wide the clouds were
 touched,

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And in their silent faces could he read
 Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
 Nor any voice of joy ; his spirit drank
 The spectacle : sensation, soul, and form,
 All melted into him ; they swallowed up
 His animal being ; in them did he live,
 And by them did he live ; they were his life. 210
 In such access of mind, in such high hour
 Of visitation from the living God,
 Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.
 No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request ;
 Rapt into still communion that transcends
 The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
 His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
 That made him ; it was blessedness and love !

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain-tops,
 Such intercourse was his, and in this sort 22C
 Was his existence oftentimes *possessed*.
 O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared
 The written promise ! Early had he learned
 To reverence the volume that displays
 The mystery, the life which cannot die ;
 But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.
 All things, responsive to the writing, there
 Breathed immortality, revolving life,
 And greatness still revolving ; infinite :
 There littleness was not ; the least of things 23C
 Seemed infinite ; and there his spirit shaped
 Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he *saw*.
 What wonder if his being thus became
 Sublime and comprehensive ! Low desires,
 Low thoughts had there no place ; yet was his heart
 Lowly ; for he was meek in gratitude,
 Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,
 And whence they flowed ; and from them he acquired
 Wisdom, which works thro' patience ; thence he
 learned
 In oft-recurring hours of sober thought 24C
 To look on Nature with a humble heart,
 Self-questioned where it did not understand,
 And with a superstitious eye of love. . . .

From his native hill
 He wandered far ; much did he see of men,
 Their manners, their enjoyments, and pursuits,
 Their passions and their feelings ; chiefly those
 Essential and eternal in the heart,
 That, 'mid the simpler forms of rural life,
 Exist more simple in their elements,
 And speak a plainer language. In the woods,
 A lone Enthusiast, and among the fields,
 Itinerant in this labour, he had passed
 The better portion of his time ; and there 35
 Spontaneously had his affections thriven
 Amid the bounties of the year, the peace

And liberty of nature ; there he kept
In solitude and solitary thought
His mind in a just equipoise of love.
Serene it was, unclouded by the cares
Of ordinary life ; unvexed, unwarped
By partial bondage. In his steady course,
No piteous revolutions had he felt,
No wild varieties of joy and grief. 360
Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,
His heart lay open ; and, by nature tuned
And constant disposition of his thoughts
To sympathy with man, he was alive
To all that was enjoyed where'er he went,
And all that was endured ; for, in himself
Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,
He had no painful pressure from without
That made him turn aside from wretchedness
With coward fears. He could *afford* to suffer 370
With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it came
That in our best experience he was rich,
And in the wisdom of our daily life.
For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,
He had observed the progress and decay
Of many minds, of minds and bodies too ;
The history of many families ;
How they had prospered ; how they were o'erthrown
By passion or mischance, or such misrule
Among the unthinking masters of the earth 380
As makes the nations groan.

MARGARET

[Lines 434 to the end.]

So was He framed ; and such his course of life
Who now, with no appendage but a staff,
The prized memorial of relinquished toils,
Upon that cottage-bench reposed his limbs,
Screened from the sun. Supine the Wanderer lay,
His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,

The shadows of the breezy elms above 440
 Dappling his face. He had not heard the sound
 Of my approaching steps, and in the shade
 Unnoticed did I stand some minutes' space.
 At length I hailed him, seeing that his hat
 Was moist with water-drops, as if the brim
 Had newly scooped a running stream. He rose,
 And ere our lively greeting into peace
 Had settled, "'Tis," said I, "a burning day :
 My lips are parched with thirst, but you, it seems,
 Have somewhere found relief." He, at the word,
 Pointing towards a sweet-briar, bade me climb 450
 The fence where that aspiring shrub looked out
 Upon the public way. It was a plot
 Of garden ground run wild, its matted weeds
 Marked with the steps of those, whom, as they
 passed,

The gooseberry trees that shot in long lank slips,
 Or currants, hanging from their leafless stems,
 In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap
 The broken wall. I looked around, and there,
 Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder boughs
 Joined in a cold damp nook, espied a well 460
 Shrouded with willow-flowers and plummy fern.
 My thirst I slaked, and, from the cheerless spot
 Withdrawing, straightway to the shade returned
 Where sate the old Man on the cottage-bench ;
 And, while, beside him, with uncovered head,
 I yet was standing, freely to respire,
 And cool my temples in the fanning air,
 Thus did he speak. "I see around me here
 Things which you cannot see : we die, my Friend,
 Nor we alone, but that which each man loved 470
 And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
 Dies with him, or is changed ; and very soon
 Even of the good is no memorial left.

—The Poets, in their elegies and songs
 Lamenting the departed, call the groves,
 They call upon the hills and streams to mourn,
 And senseless rocks ; nor idly ; for they speak,

In these their invocations, with a voice
Obedient to the strong creative power 480
Of human passion. Sympathies there are
More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred birth,
That steal upon the meditative mind,
And grow with thought. Beside yon spring I stood,
And eyed its waters till we seemed to feel
One sadness, they and I. For them a bond
Of brotherhood is broken : time has been
When, every day, the touch of human hand
Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them up
In mortal stillness ; and they ministered 490
To human comfort. Stooping down to drink,
Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied
The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,
Green with the moss of years, and subject only
To the soft handling of the elements :
There let it lie—how foolish are such thoughts !
Forgive them ;—never—never did my steps
Approach this door but she who dwelt within
A daughter's welcome gave me, and I loved her
As my own child. Oh, Sir ! the good die first, 500
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
Burn to the socket. Many a passenger
Hath blessed poor Margaret for her gentle looks,
When she upheld the cool refreshment drawn
From that forsaken spring ; and no one came
But he was welcome ; no one went away
But that it seemed she loved him. She is dead,
The light extinguished of her lonely hut,
The hut itself abandoned to decay,
And she forgotten in the quiet grave. 510

“ I speak,” continued he, “ of One whose stock
Of virtues bloomed beneath this lowly roof.
She was a Woman of a steady mind,
Tender and deep in her excess of love ;
Not speaking much, pleased rather with the joy
Of her own thoughts : by some especial care
Her temper had been framed, as if to make

A Being, who by adding love to peace
 Might live on earth a life of happiness.
 Her wedded Partner lacked not on his side 520
 The humble worth that satisfied her heart :
 Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal
 Keenly industrious. She with pride would tell
 That he was often seated at his loom,
 In summer, ere the mower was abroad
 Among the dewy grass,—in early spring,
 Ere the last star had vanished.—They who passed
 At evening, from behind the garden fence
 Might hear his busy spade, which he would ply,
 After his daily work, until the light 530
 Had failed, and every leaf and flower were lost
 In the dark hedges. So their days were spent
 In peace and comfort ; and a pretty boy
 Was their best hope, next to the God in heaven.

“ Not twenty years ago, but you I think
 Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there came
 Two blighting seasons, when the fields were left
 With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven to add
 A worse affliction in the plague of war :
 This happy Land was stricken to the heart ! 540
 A Wanderer then among the cottages,
 I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw
 The hardships of that season : many rich
 Sank down, as in a dream, among the poor ;
 And of the poor did many cease to be,
 And their place knew them not. Meanwhile, abridged
 Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled
 To numerous self-denials, Margaret
 Went struggling on through those calamitous years
 With cheerful hope, until the second autumn, 550
 When her life's Helpmate on a sick-bed lay,
 Smitten with perilous fever. In disease
 He lingered long ; and, when his strength returned,
 He found the little he had stored, to meet
 The hour of accident or crippling age,
 Was all consumed. A second infant now

Was added to the troubles of a time
 Laden, for them and all of their degree,
 With care and sorrow : shoals of artisans
 From ill-requited labour turned adrift 560
 Sought daily bread from public charity,
 They, and their wives and children—happier far
 Could they have lived as do the little birds
 That peck along the hedge-rows, or the kite
 That makes her dwelling on the mountain rocks !

“ A sad reverse it was for him who long
 Had filled with plenty, and possessed in peace,
 This lonely Cottage. At the door he stood,
 And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes
 That had no mirth in them ; or with his knife 570
 Carved uncouth figures on the heads of sticks—
 Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook
 In house or garden, any casual work
 Of use or ornament ; and with a strange,
 Amusing, yet uneasy, novelty,
 He mingled, where he might, the various tasks
 Of summer, autumn, winter, and of spring.
 But this endured not ; his good humour soon
 Became a weight in which no pleasure was :
 And poverty brought on a petted mood 580
 And a sore temper : day by day he drooped,
 And he would leave his work—and to the town
 Would turn without an errand his slack steps ;
 Or wander here and there among the fields.
 One while he would speak lightly of his babes,
 And with a cruel tongue : at other times
 He tossed them with a false unnatural joy :
 And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks
 Of the poor innocent children. ‘ Every smile,’
 Said Margaret to me, here beneath these trees,
 ‘ Made my heart bleed.’ ”

At this the Wanderer paused ;
 And, looking up to those enormous elms, 592
 He said, “ 'Tis now the hour of deepest noon.
 At this still season of repose and peace,

This hour when all things which are not at rest
 Are cheerful ; while this multitude of flies
 With tuneful hum is filling all the air ;
 Why should a tear be on an old Man's cheek ?
 Why should we thus, with an untoward mind,
 And in the weakness of humanity, 600
 From natural wisdom turn our hearts away ;
 To natural comfort shut out eyes and ears ;
 And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb
 The calm of nature with our restless thoughts ?"

He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone :
 But, when he ended, there was in his face
 Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,
 That for a little time it stole away
 All recollection ; and that simple tale
 Passed from my mind like a forgotten sound. 610
 A while on trivial things we held discourse,
 To me soon tasteless. In my own despite,
 I thought of that poor Woman as of one
 Whom I had known and loved. He had rehearsed
 Her homely tale with such familiar power,
 With such an active countenance, an eye
 So busy, that the things of which he spake
 Seemed present ; and, attention now relaxed,
 A heart-felt chillness crept along my veins.
 I rose ; and, having left the breezy shade, 620
 Stood drinking comfort from the warmer sun,
 That had not cheered me long—ere, looking round
 Upon that tranquil Ruin, I returned,
 And begged of the old Man that, for my sake,
 He would resume his story.

He replied,
 " It were a wantonness, and would demand
 Severe reproof, if we were men whose hearts
 Could hold vain dalliance with the misery
 Even of the dead ; contented thence to draw
 A momentary pleasure, never marked

By reason, barren of all future good.
But we have known that there is often found
In mournful thoughts, and always might be found,
A power to virtue friendly ; were 't not so,
I am a dreamer among men, indeed
An idle dreamer ! 'Tis a common tale,
An ordinary sorrow of man's life,
A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed
In bodily form.—But without further bidding
I will proceed.

While thus it fared with them,
To whom this cottage, till those hapless years,
Had been a blessed home, it was my chance
To travel in a country far remote ; 643
And when these lofty elms once more appeared
What pleasant expectations lured me on
O'er the flat Common !—With quick step I reached
The threshold, lifted with light hand the latch ;
But, when I entered, Margaret looked at me
A little while ; then turned her head away
Speechless,—and, sitting down upon a chair,
Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do, 651
Nor how to speak to her. Poor Wretch ! at last
She rose from off her seat, and then,—O Sir !
I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my name :—
With fervent love, and with a face of grief
Unutterably helpless, and a look
That seemed to cling upon me, she enquired
If I had seen her husband. As she spake
A strange surprise and fear came to my heart,
Nor had I power to answer ere she told 660
That he had disappeared—not two months gone.
He left his house : two wretched days had past,
And on the third, as wistfully she raised
Her head from off her pillow, to look forth,
Like one in trouble, for returning light,
Within her chamber-casement she espied
A folded paper, lying as if placed
To meet her waking eyes. This tremblingly
She opened—found no writing, but beheld

Pieces of money carefully enclosed, 670
 Silver and gold. 'I shuddered at the sight,'
 Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his hand
 That must have placed it there ; and ere that day
 Was ended, that long anxious day, I learned,
 From one who by my husband had been sent
 With the sad news, that he had joined a troop
 Of soldiers, going to a distant land.
 —He left me thus—he could not gather heart
 To take a farewell of me ; for he feared
 That I should follow with my babes, and sink 680
 Beneath the misery of that wandering life.'

"This tale did Margaret tell with many tears :
 And, when she ended, I had little power
 To give her comfort, and was glad to take
 Such words of hope from her own mouth as served
 To cheer us both. But long we had not talked
 Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,
 And with a brighter eye she looked around
 As if she had been shedding tears of joy.
 We parted.—'Twas the time of early spring ; 690
 I left her busy with her garden tools ;
 And well remember, o'er that fence she looked,
 And, while I paced along the foot-way path,
 Called out, and sent a blessing after me,
 With tender cheerfulness, and with a voice
 That seemed the very sound of happy thoughts.

"I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale,
 With my accustomed load ; in heat and cold,
 Through many a wood and many an open ground,
 In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair, 700
 Drooping or blithe of heart, as might befall ;
 My best companions now the driving winds,
 And now the 'trotting brooks' and whispering trees,
 And now the music of my own sad steps,
 With many a short-lived thought that passed between,
 And disappeared.

I journeyed back this way,

When, in the warmth of midsummer, the wheat
Was yellow ; and the soft and bladed grass,
Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field spread
Its tender verdure. At the door arrived, 710
I found that she was absent. In the shade,
Where now we sit, I waited her return.
Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore
Its customary look,—only, it seemed,
The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch,
Hung down in heavier tufts ; and that bright weed,
The yellow stone-crop, suffered to take root
Along the window's edge, profusely grew
Blinding the lower panes. I turned aside,
And strolled into her garden. It appeared 720
To lag behind the season, and had lost
Its pride of neatness. Daisy-flowers and thrift
Had broken their trim border-lines, and straggled
O'er paths they used to deck : carnations, once
Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less
For the peculiar pains they had required,
Declined their languid heads, wanting support.
The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths and bells,
Had twined about her two small rows of peas,
And dragged them to the earth.

Ere this an hour 730
Was wasted.—Back I turned my restless steps ;
A stranger passed ; and, guessing whom I sought,
He said that she was used to ramble far.—
The sun was sinking in the west ; and now
I sate with sad impatience. From within
Her solitary infant cried aloud ;
Then, like a blast that dies away self-stilled,
The voice was silent. From the bench I rose ;
But neither could divert nor soothe my thoughts.
The spot, though fair, was very desolate— 740
The longer I remained, more desolate :
And, looking round me, now I first observed
The corner stones, on either side the porch,
With dull red stains discoloured, and stuck o'er
With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep,

That fed upon the Common, thither came
 Familiarly, and found a couching-place
 Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows fell
 From these tall elms; the cottage-clock struck
 eight;—

I turned, and saw her distant a few steps. 750

Her face was pale and thin—her figure, too,
 Was changed. As she unlocked the door, she said,
 'It grieves me you have waited here so long,
 But, in good truth, I've wandered much of late;
 And, sometimes—to my shame I speak—have need
 Of my best prayers to bring me back again.'

While on the board she spread our evening meal,
 She told me—interrupting not the work

Which gave employment to her listless hands—

That she had parted with her elder child; 760

To a kind master on a distant farm

Now happily apprenticed.—'I perceive

You look at me, and you have cause; to-day

I have been travelling far; and many days

About the fields I wander, knowing this

Only, that what I seek I cannot find;

And so I waste my time: for I am changed;

And to myself,' said she, 'have done much wrong

And to this helpless infant. I have slept

Weeping, and weeping have I waked; my tears

Have flowed as if my body were not such 771

As others are; and I could never die.

But I am now in mind and in my heart

More easy; and I hope,' said she, 'that God

Will give me patience to endure the things

Which I behold at home.'

It would have grieved

Your very soul to see her. Sir, I feel

The story linger in my heart; I fear

'Tis long and tedious; but my spirit clings

To that poor Woman:—so familiarly 780

Do I perceive her manner, and her look,

And presence; and so deeply do I feel

Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my walks

A momentary trance comes over me ;
 And to myself I seem to muse on One
 By sorrow laid asleep ; or borne away,
 A human being destined to awake
 To human life, or something very near
 To human life, when he shall come again
 For whom she suffered. Yes, it would have grieved
 Your very soul to see her : evermore 791
 Her eyelids drooped, her eyes downward were cast ;
 And, when she at her table gave me food,
 She did not look at me. Her voice was low,
 Her body was subdued. In every act
 Pertaining to her house-affairs, appeared
 The careless stillness of a thinking mind
 Self-occupied ; to which all outward things
 Are like an idle matter. Still she sighed,
 But yet no motion of the breast was seen, 800
 No heaving of the heart. While by the fire
 We sate together, sighs came on my ear,
 I knew not how, and hardly whence they came.

“ Ere my departure, to her care I gave,
 For her son’s use, some tokens of regard,
 Which with a look of welcome she received ;
 And I exhorted her to place her trust
 In God’s good love, and seek his help by prayer.
 I took my staff, and, when I kissed her babe,
 The tears stood in her eyes. I left her then 810
 With the best hope and comfort I could give :
 She thanked me for my wish ;—but for my hope
 It seemed she did not thank me.

I returned,
 And took my rounds along this road again
 When on its sunny bank the primrose flower
 Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the Spring.
 I found her sad and drooping : she had learned
 No tidings of her husband ; if he lived,
 She knew not that he lived ; if he were dead,
 She knew not he was dead. She seemed the same
 In person and appearance ; but her house 821

Bespake a sleepy hand of negligence ;
 The floor was neither dry nor neat, the hearth
 Was comfortless, and her small lot of books,
 Which, in the cottage-window, heretofore
 Had been piled up against the corner panes
 In seemly order, now, with straggling leaves
 Lay scattered here and there, open or shut,
 As they had chanced to fall. Her infant Babe
 Had from its mother caught the trick of grief,
 And sighed among its playthings. I withdrew,
 And once again entering the garden saw, 832
 More plainly still, that poverty and grief
 Were now come nearer to her : weeds defaced
 The hardened soil, and knots of withered grass :
 No ridges there appeared of clear black mould,
 No winter greenness ; of her herbs and flowers,
 It seemed the better part were gnawed away
 Or trampled into earth ; a chain of straw,
 Which had been twined about the slender stem
 Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root ; 841
 The bark was nibbled round by truant sheep.
 —Margaret stood near, her infant in her arms,
 And, noting that my eye was on the tree,
 She said, ' I fear it will be dead and gone
 Ere Robert come again.' When to the House
 We had returned together, she enquired
 If I had any hope :—but for her babe
 And for her little orphan boy, she said,
 She had no wish to live, that she must die 850
 Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom
 Still in its place ; his Sunday garments hung
 Upon the self-same nail ; his very staff
 Stood undisturbed behind the door.

And when,
 In bleak December, I retraced this way,
 She told me that her little babe was dead,
 And she was left alone. She now, released
 From her maternal cares, had taken up
 The employment common through these wilds, and
 gained,

By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself ; 860
And for this end had hired a neighbour's boy
To give her needful help. That very time
Most willingly she put her work aside,
And walked with me along the miry road,
Heedless how far ; and, in such piteous sort
That any heart had ached to hear her, begged
That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask
For him whom she had lost. We parted then—
Our final parting ; for from that time forth
Did many seasons pass ere I returned 870
Into this tract again.

Nine tedious years ;
From their first separation, nine long years,
She lingered in unquiet widowhood ;
A Wife and Widow. Needs must it have been
A sore heart-wasting ! I have heard, my Friend,
That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate
Alone, through half the vacant sabbath day ;
And, if a dog passed by, she still would quit
The shade, and look abroad. On this old bench
For hours she sate ; and evermore her eye 880
Was busy in the distance, shaping things
That made her heart beat quick. You see that
path,
Now faint,—the grass has crept o'er its grey line ;
There, to and fro, she paced through many a day
Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp
That girt her waist, spinning the long-drawn thread
With backward steps. Yet ever as there passed
A man whose garments showed the soldier's red,
Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,
The little child who sate to turn the wheel 890
Ceased from his task ; and she with faltering voice
Made many a fond enquiry ; and when they,
Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone by,
Her heart was still more sad. And by yon gate,
That bars the traveller's road, she often stood,
And when a stranger horseman came, the latch
Would lift, and in his face look wistfully :

Most happy, if, from aught discovered there
 Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat
 The same sad question. Meanwhile her poor Hut
 Sank to decay ; for he was gone, whose hand, 901
 At the first nipping of October frost,
 Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of
 straw
 Chequered the green-grown thatch. And so she
 lived
 Through the long winter, reckless and alone ;
 Until her house by frost, and thaw, and rain,
 Was sapped ; and while she slept, the nightly
 damps
 Did chill her breast ; and in the stormy day
 Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the wind,
 Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still 910
 She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds
 Have parted hence ; and still that length of road,
 And this rude bench, one torturing hope endeared,
 Fast rooted at her heart : and here, my Friend, —
 In sickness she remained ; and here she died ;
 Last human tenant of these ruined walls !"

The old Man ceased : he saw that I was moved ;
 From that low bench, rising instinctively
 I turned aside in weakness, nor had power
 To thank him for the tale which he had told. 920
 I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall
 Reviewed that Woman's sufferings ; and it seemed
 To comfort me while with a brother's love
 I blessed her in the impotence of grief.
 Then towards the cottage I returned ; and traced
 Fondly, though with an interest more mild,
 That secret spirit of humanity
 Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies
 Of nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds, and flowers,
 And silent overgrowings, still survived. 930
 The old Man, noting this, resumed, and said,
 " My Friend ! enough to sorrow you have given,
 The purposes of wisdom ask no more :

Nor more would she have craved as due to One
Who, in her worst distress, had oftentimes felt
The unbounded might of prayer; and learned, with
soul

Fixed on the Cross, that consolation springs,
From sources deeper far than deepest pain,
For the meek Sufferer. Why then should we read
The forms of things with an unworthy eye?
She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is here.

I well remember that those very plumes, 942
Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that
wall,

By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,
As once I passed, into my heart conveyed
So still an image of tranquillity,
So calm and still, and looked so beautiful
Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my mind,
That what we feel of sorrow and despair 949
From ruin and from change, and all the grief
That passing shows of Being leave behind,
Appeared an idle dream, that could maintain,
Nowhere, dominion o'er the enlightened spirit
Whose meditative sympathies repose
Upon the breast of Faith. I turned away,
And walked along my road in happiness."

He ceased. Ere long the sun declining shot
A slant and mellow radiance, which began
To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees, 959
We sate on that low bench: and now we felt,
Admonished thus, the sweet hour coming on.
A linnet warbled from those lofty elms,
A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,
At distance heard, peopled the milder air.
The old Man rose, and, with a sprightly mien
Of hopeful preparation, grasped his staff;
Together casting then a farewell look
Upon those silent walls, we left the shade;
And, ere the stars were visible, had reached
A village-inn,—our evening resting-place. 970

THE MOUNTAIN TWINS

[Book II, lines 688-725.]

In genial mood,

While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate
 Fronting the window of that little cell, 690
 I could not, ever and anon, forbear
 To glance an upward look on two huge Peaks,
 That from some other vale peered into this.
 "Those lusty twins," exclaimed our host, "if here
 It were your lot to dwell, would soon become
 Your prized companions.—Many are the notes
 Which, in his tuneful course, the wind draws forth
 From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing
 shores ;
 And well those lofty brethren bear their part
 In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm 700
 Rides high ; then all the upper air they fill
 With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,
 Like smoke, along the level of the blast,
 In mighty current ; theirs, too, is the song
 Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails ;
 And, in the grim and breathless hour of noon,
 Methinks that I have heard them echo back
 The thunder's greeting. Nor have nature's laws
 Left them ungifted with a power to yield
 Music of finer tone ; a harmony, 710
 So do I call it, though it be the hand
 Of silence, though there be no voice ;—the clouds,
 The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
 Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,
 And have an answer—thither come, and shape
 A language not unwelcome to sick hearts
 And idle spirits :—there the sun himself,
 At the calm close of summer's longest day,
 Rests his substantial orb ;—between those heights
 And on the top of either pinnacle, 720
 More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,

Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.
Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
Than the mute agents stirring there :—alone
Here do I sit and watch.—"

"AN UNIMAGINABLE SIGHT"

[Lines 828-877.]

With their freight homeward the shepherds moved
Through the dull mist, I following—when a step,
A single step, that freed me from the skirts 830
Of the blind vapour, opened to my view
Glory beyond all glory ever seen
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul !
The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,
Was of a mighty city—boldly say
A wilderness of building, sinking far
And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth,
Far sinking into splendour—without end !
Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,
With alabaster domes, and silver spires, 840
And blazing terrace upon terrace, high
Uplifted ; here, serene pavilions bright,
In avenues disposed ; there, towers begirt
With battlements that on their restless fronts
Bore stars—illumination of all gems !
By earthly nature had the effect been wrought
Upon the dark materials of the storm
Now pacified ; on them, and on the coves
And mountain-steeps and summits, whereunto
The vapours had receded, taking there 850
Their station under a cerulean sky.
Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight !
Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and emerald
turf,
Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire sky,
Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed,
Molten together, and composing thus,
Each lost in each, that marvellous array

Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge
 Fantastic pomp of structure without name,
 In fleecy folds voluminous, enwrapped. 860
 Right in the midst, where interspace appeared
 Of open court, an object like a throne
 Under a shining canopy of state
 Stood fixed ; and fixed resemblances were seen
 To implements of ordinary use,
 But vast in size, in substance glorified ;
 Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld
 In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest power
 For admiration and mysterious awe.
 'This little Vale, a dwelling-place of Man, 870
 Lay low beneath my feet ; 'twas visible—
 I saw not, but I felt that it was there.
 That which I *saw* was the revealed abode
 Of Spirits in beatitude : my heart
 Swelled in my breast.—' I have been dead,' I cried,
 ' And now I live ! Oh ! wherefore *do* I live ?'
 And with that pang I prayed to be no more !—"

BEREAVEMENT

[Book III, lines 681-705.]

If she, of life
 Blameless, so intimate with love and joy
 And all the tender motions of the soul,
 Had been supplanted, could I hope to stand—
 Infirm, dependent, and now destitute ?
 I called on dreams and visions, to disclose
 That which is veiled from waking thought ; con-
 jured
 Eternity, as men constrain a ghost
 To appear and answer ; to the grave I spake
 Imploringly ;—looked up, and asked the Heavens
 If Angels traversed their cerulean floors, 691
 If fixed or wandering star could tidings yield
 Of the departed spirit—what abode
 It occupies—what consciousness retains

Of former loves and interests. Then my soul
 Turned inward,—to examine of what stuff
 Time's fetters are composed ; and life was put
 To inquisition, long and profitless !
 By pain of heart—now checked—and now im-
 pelled— 699
 The intellectual power, through words and things,
 Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way !
 And from those transports, and these toils abstruse,
 Some trace am I enabled to retain
 Of time, else lost ;—existing unto me
 Only by records in myself not found."

THINGS ETERNAL

[Book IV, lines 66-122.]

"And what are things eternal?—powers de-
 part,"
 The grey-haired Wanderer steadfastly replied,
 Answering the question which himself had asked,
 "Possessions vanish, and opinions change,
 And passions hold a fluctuating seat : 70
 But, by the storms of circumstance unshaken,
 And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,
 Duty exists ;—immutably survive,
 For our support, the measures and the forms,
 Which an abstract intelligence supplies ;
 Whose kingdom is, where time and space are not.
 Of other converse which mind, soul, and heart,
 Do, with united urgency, require,
 What more that may not perish ?—Thou, dread
 source,
 Prime, self-existing cause and end of all 80
 That in the scale of being fill their place ;
 Above our human region, or below,
 Set and sustained ;—thou, who didst wrap the
 cloud
 Of infancy around us, that thyself,
 Therein, with our simplicity awhile

Might'st hold, on earth, communion undisturbed ;
 Who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,
 Or from its death-like void, with punctual care,
 And touch as gentle as the morning light,
 Restor'st us, daily, to the powers of sense 90
 And reason's steadfast rule—thou, thou alone
 Art everlasting, and the blessed Spirits,
 Which thou includest, as the sea her waves :
 For adoration thou endur'st ; endure
 For consciousness the motions of thy will ;
 For apprehension those transcendent truths
 Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws
 (Submission constituting strength and power)
 Even to thy Being's infinite majesty !
 This universe shall pass away—a work 100
 Glorious ! because the shadow of thy might,
 A step, or link, for intercourse with thee.
 Ah ! if the time must come, in which my feet
 No more shall stray where meditation leads,
 By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy wild,
 Loved haunts like these ; the unimprisoned Mind
 May yet have scope to range among her own,
 Her thoughts, her images, her high desires.
 If the dear faculty of sight should fail,
 Still, it may be allowed me to remember 110
 What visionary powers of eye and soul
 In youth were mine ; when, stationed on the top
 Of some huge hill, expectant, I beheld
 The sun rise up, from distant climes returned
 Darkness to chase, and sleep ; and bring the day
 His bounteous gift ! or saw him toward the deep
 Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds
 Attended ; then, my spirit was entranced
 With joy exalted to beatitude ; 119
 The measure of my soul was filled with bliss,
 And holiest love ; as earth, sea, air, with light,
 With pomp, with glory, with magnificence !”

“OH ! WHAT A JOY IT WERE ”

[Lines 508-539.]

“ Oh ! what a joy it were, in vigorous health,
 To have a body (this our vital frame
 With shrinking sensibility endued, 510
 And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)
 And to the elements surrender it
 As if it were a spirit !—How divine,
 The liberty, for frail, for mortal, man
 To roam at large among unpeopled glens
 And mountainous retirements, only trod
 By devious footsteps ; regions consecrate
 To oldest time ! and, reckless of the storm
 That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,
 Be as a presence or a motion—one 520
 Among the many there ; and while the mists
 Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes
 And phantoms from the crags and solid earth
 As fast as a musician scatters sounds
 Out of an instrument ; and while the streams
 (As at a first creation and in haste
 To exercise their untried faculties)
 Descending from the region of the clouds,
 And starting from the hollows of the earth
 More multitudinous every moment, rend 530
 Their way before them—what a joy to roam
 An equal among mightiest energies ;
 And haply sometimes with articulate voice,
 Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard
 By him that utters it, exclaim aloud
 ‘ Rage on, ye elements ! let moon and stars
 Their aspects lend, and mingle in their turn
 With this commotion (ruinous though it be)
 From day to night, from night to day, pro-
 longed ! ’ ” 539

SCIENCE AND THE SOUL

[Lines 944-994.]

" Shall men for whom our age
 Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared,
 To explore the world without and world within,
 Be joyless as the blind ? Ambitious spirits—
 Whom earth, at this late season, hath produced
 To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh
 The planets in the hollow of their hand ; 950
 And they who rather dive than soar, whose pains
 Have solved the elements, or analysed
 The thinking principle—shall they in fact
 Prove a degraded Race ? and what avails
 Renown, if their presumption make them such ?
 Oh ! there is laughter at their work in heaven !
 Enquire of ancient Wisdom ; go, demand
 Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant
 That we should pry far off yet be unraised ;
 That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore,
 Viewing all objects unremittingly 961
 In disconnection dead and spiritless ;
 And still dividing, and dividing still,
 Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
 With the perverse attempt, while littleness
 May yet become more little ; waging thus
 An impious warfare with the very life
 Of our own souls !

And if indeed there be
 An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom
 Our dark foundations rest, could he design 970
 That this magnificent effect of power,
 The earth we tread, the sky that we behold
 By day, and all the pomp which night reveals ;
 That these—and that superior mystery
 Our vital frame, so fearfully devised,
 And the dread soul within it—should exist
 Only to be examined, pondered, searched,
 Probed, vexed, and criticised ?—Accuse me not

Of arrogance, unknown Wanderer as I am,
If, having walked with Nature threescore years,
And offered, far as frailty would allow, 981
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
Whom I have served, that their DIVINITY
Revolts, offended at the ways of men
Swayed by such motives, to such ends employed ;
Philosophers, who, though the human soul
Be of a thousand faculties composed,
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
This soul, and the transcendent universe, 990
No more than as a mirror that reflects
To proud Self-love her own intelligence ;
That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss
Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly !”

THE VOICE OF THE UNIVERSE

[Lines 1132-1274.]

“ I have seen
A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract
Of inland ground, applying to his ear
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell ;
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul
Listened intensely ; and his countenance soon
Brightened with joy ; for from within were heard
Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed
Mysterious union with its native sea. 1140
Even such a shell the universe itself
Is to the ear of Faith ; and there are times,
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart
Authentic tidings of invisible things ;
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power ;
And central peace, subsisting at the heart
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,
Adore, and worship, when you know it not ;
Pious beyond the intention of your thought ;
Devout above the meaning of your will. 1150

—Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to feel.
 The estate of man would be indeed forlorn
 If false conclusions of the reasoning power
 Made the eye blind, and closed the passages
 Through which the ear converses with the heart.
 Has not the soul, the being of your life,
 Received a shock of awful consciousness,
 In some calm season, when these lofty rocks
 At night's approach bring down the unclouded sky,
 To rest upon their circumambient walls ; 1160
 A temple framing of dimensions vast,
 And yet not too enormous for the sound
 Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst
 Sublime of instrumental harmony,
 To glorify the Eternal ! What if these .
 Did never break the stillness that prevails
 Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,
 And the soft woodlark here did never chant
 Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide 1169
 Impulse and utterance. The whispering air
 Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,
 And blind recesses of the caverned rocks ;
 The little rills, and waters numberless,
 Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes
 With the loud streams : and often, at the hour
 When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,
 Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
 One voice—the solitary raven, flying
 Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,
 Unseen, perchance above all power of sight—
 An iron knell ! with echoes from afar 1181
 Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with which
 The wanderer accompanies her flight
 Through the calm regions, fades upon the ear,
 Diminishing by distance till it seemed
 To expire ; yet from the abyss is caught again,
 And yet again recovered !

But descending
 From these imaginative heights, that yield
 Far-stretching views into eternity,

Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler power
Your cherished sullenness is forced to bend 1191
Even here, where her amenities are sown
With sparing hand. Then trust yourself abroad
To range her blooming bowers, and spacious fields,
Where on the labours of the happy throng
She smiles, including in her wide embrace
City, and town, and tower,—and sea with ships
Sprinkled ;—be our Companion while we track
Her rivers populous with gliding life ;
While, free as air, o'er printless sands we march,
Or pierce the gloom of her majestic woods ; 1201
Roaming, or resting under grateful shade
In peace and meditative cheerfulness ;
Where living things, and things inanimate,
Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye and ear,
And speak to social reason's inner sense,
With inarticulate language.

For, the Man—

Who, in this spirit, communes with the Forms
Of nature, who with understanding heart
Both knows and loves such objects as excite 1210
No morbid passions, no disquietude,
No vengeance, and no hatred—needs must feel
The joy of that pure principle of love
So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught
Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose
But seek for objects of a kindred love
In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.
Accordingly he by degrees perceives
His feelings of aversion softened down ;
A holy tenderness pervade his frame. 1220
His sanity of reason not impaired,
Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,
From a clear fountain flowing, he looks round
And seeks for good ; and finds the good he seeks :
Until abhorrence and contempt are things
He only knows by name ; and, if he hear,
From other mouths, the language which they
speak,

He is compassionate ; and has no thought,
No feeling, which can overcome his love.

“ And further ; by contemplating these Forms
In the relations which they bear to man, 1231
He shall discern, how, through the various means
Which silently they yield, are multiplied
The spiritual presences of absent things.
Trust me, that for the instructed, time will come
When they shall meet no object but may teach
Some acceptable lesson to their minds
Of human suffering, or of human joy.
So shall they learn, while all things speak of man,
Their duties from all forms ; and general laws,
And local accidents, shall tend alike 1241
To rouse, to urge ; and, with the will, confer
The ability to spread the blessings wide
Of true philanthropy. The light of love
Not failing, perseverance from their steps
Departing not, for them shall be confirmed
The glorious habit by which sense is made
Subservient still to moral purposes,
Auxiliar to divine. That change shall clothe
The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore 1250
The burthen of existence. Science then
Shall be a precious visitant ; and then,
And only then, be worthy of her name :
For then her heart shall kindle ; her dull eye,
Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang
Chained to its object in brute slavery ;
But taught with patient interest to watch
The processes of things, and serve the cause
Of order and distinctness, not for this
Shall it forget that its most noble use, 1260
Its most illustrious province, must be found
In furnishing clear guidance, a support
Not treacherous, to the mind's *excursive* power.
—So build we up the Being that we are ;
Thus deeply drinking-in the soul of things,
We shall be wise perforce ; and, while inspired

By choice, and conscious that the Will is free,
Shall move unswerving, even as if impelled
By strict necessity, along the path
Of order and of good. Whate'er we see, 1270
Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine ;
Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral strength,
Earthly desires ; and raise, to loftier heights
Of divine love, our intellectual soul."

A TEAMSTER

[Book VII, lines 550-563.]

He was a peasant of the lowest class : 550
 Grey locks profusely round his temples hung
 In clustering curls, like ivy, which the bite
 Of winter cannot thin ; the fresh air lodged
 Within his cheek, as light within a cloud ;
 And he returned our greeting with a smile.
 When he had passed, the Solitary spake ;
 “ A Man he seems of cheerful yesterdays
 And confident to-morrows ; with a face
 Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much
 Of Nature’s impress,—gaiety and health, 560
 Freedom and hope ; but keen, withal, and shrewd.
 His gestures note,—and hark ! his tones of voice
 Are all vivacious as his mien and looks.”

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAN AND MAN

[Book IX, lines 206-254.]

“ Alas ! what differs more than man from man !
And whence that difference ? Whence but from
himself ?
For see the universal Race endowed
With the same upright form ! The sun is fixed,
And the infinite magnificence of heaven
Fixed, within reach of every human eye ;

The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears ;
 The vernal field infuses fresh delight
 Into all hearts. Throughout the world of sense,
 Even as an object is sublime or fair,
 That object is laid open to the view
 Without reserve or veil ; and as a power
 Is salutary, or an influence sweet,
 Are each and all enabled to perceive
 That power, that influence, by impartial law. 220
 Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all ;
 Reason, and, with that reason, smiles and tears ;
 Imagination, freedom in the will ;
 Conscience to guide and check ; and death to be
 Foretasted, immortality conceived
 By all,—a blissful immortality,
 To them whose holiness on earth shall make
 The Spirit capable of heaven, assured.
 Strange, then, nor less than monstrous, might be
 deemed

The failure, if the Almighty, to this point 230
 Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide
 The excellence of moral qualities
 From common understanding ; leaving truth
 And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark ;
 Hard to be won, and only by a few ;
 Strange, should He deal herein with nice respects,
 And frustrate all the rest ! Believe it not :
 The primal duties shine aloft—like stars ;
 The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,
 Are scattered at the feet of Man—like flowers.
 The generous inclination, the just rule, 241
 Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts—
 No mystery is here ! Here is no boon
 For high—yet not for low ; for proudly graced—
 Yet not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends
 To heaven as lightly from the cottage-hearth
 As from the haughtiest palace. He, whose soul
 Ponders this true equality, may walk
 The fields of earth with gratitude and hope ;
 Yet, in that meditation, will he find 250

Motive to sadder grief, as we have found ;
 Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,
 And for the injustice grieving, that hath made
 So wide a difference between man and man."

THE LAKE

[Lines 419-608.]

" Behold the shades of afternoon have fallen
 Upon this flowery slope ; and see—beyond—
 The silvery lake is streaked with placid blue ;
 As if preparing for the peace of evening. 422
 How temptingly the landscape shines ! The air
 Breathes invitation ; easy is the walk
 To the lake's margin, where a boat lies moored
 Under a sheltering tree."—Upon this hint
 We rose together : all were pleased ; but most
 The beauteous girl, whose cheek was flushed with
 joy.

Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills
 She vanished—eager to impart the scheme 430
 To her loved brother and his shy compeer.
 —Now was there bustle in the Vicar's house
 And earnest preparation.—Forth we went.
 And down the vale along the streamlet's edge
 Pursued our way, a broken company,
 Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.
 Thus having reached a bridge, that overarched
 The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed
 In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw
 A twofold image ; on a grassy bank 440
 A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood
 Another and the same ! Most beautiful,
 On the green turf, with his imperial front
 Shaggy and bold, and wreathèd horns superb,
 The breathing creature stood ; as beautiful,
 Beneath him, showed his shadowy counterpart.
 Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,
 And each seemed centre of his own fair world :

Antipodes unconscious of each other,
 Yet, in partition, with their several spheres, 450
 Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight !

" Ah ! what a pity were it to disperse,
 Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,
 And yet a breath can do it !"

These few words

The Lady whispered, while we stood and gazed
 Gathered together, all in still delight,
 Not without awe. Thence passing on, she said
 In like low voice to my particular ear,
 " I love to hear that eloquent old Man
 Pour forth his meditations, and descant 460
 On human life from infancy to age.
 How pure his spirit ! in what vivid hues
 His mind gives back the various forms of things,
 Caught in their fairest, happiest, attitude !
 While he is speaking, I have power to see
 Even as he sees ; but when his voice hath ceased,
 Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as now,
 That combinations so serene and bright
 Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,
 Whose highest beauty, beautiful as it is, 470
 Like that reflected in yon quiet pool,
 Seems but a fleeting sunbeam's gift, whose peace
 The sufferance only of a breath of air !"

More had she said—but sportive shouts were heard
 Sent from the jocund hearts of those two Boys,
 Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,
 Down the green field came tripping after us.
 With caution we embarked ; and now the pair
 For prouder service were addrest ; but each,
 Wishful to leave an opening for my choice, 480
 Dropped the light oar his eager hand had seized.
 Thanks given for that becoming courtesy,
 Their place I took—and for a grateful office
 Pregnant with recollections of the time
 When, on thy bosom, spacious Windermere !
 A Youth, I practised this delightful art ;

Tossed on the waves alone, or 'mid a crew
Of joyous comrades. Soon as the reedy marge
Was cleared, I dipped, with arms accordant, oars
Free from obstruction ; and the boat advanced
Through crystal water, smoothly as a hawk, 491
That, disentangled from the shady boughs
Of some thick wood, her place of covert, cleaves
With correspondent wings the abyss of air.

—"Observe," the Vicar said, "yon rocky isle
With birch-trees fringed ; my hand shall guide the
helm,

While thitherward we shape our course ; or while
We seek that other, on the western shore ;
Where the bare columns of those lofty firs,
Supporting gracefully a massy dome 500
Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate
A Grecian temple rising from the Deep."

"Turn where we may," said I, "we cannot err
In this delicious region."—Cultured slopes,
Wild tracks of forest-ground, and scattered groves,
And mountains bare, or clothed with ancient woods,
Surrounded us ; and, as we held our way
Along the level of the glassy flood,
They ceased not to surround us ; change of place,
From kindred features diversely combined, 510
Producing change of beauty ever new.

—Ah ! that such beauty, varying in the light
Of living nature, cannot be portrayed
By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill ;
But is the property of him alone
Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,
And in his mind recorded it with love !
Suffice it, therefore, if the rural Muse
Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her Poet speaks
Of trivial occupations well devised, 520
And unsought pleasures springing up by chance ;
As if some friendly Genius had ordained
That, as the day thus far had been enriched
By acquisition of sincere delight,
The same should be continued to its close.

One spirit animating old and young,
 A gipsy-fire we kindled on the shore
 Of the fair Isle with birch-trees fringed—and there,
 Merrily seated in a ring, partook
 A choice repast—served by our young companions
 With rival earnestness and kindred glee. 531
 Launched from our hands the smooth stone skimmed
 the lake ;

With shouts we raised the echoes ;—stiller sounds
 The lovely Girl supplied—a simple song,
 Whose low tones reached not to the distant rocks
 To be repeated thence, but gently sank
 Into our hearts ; and charmed the peaceful flood.
 Rapaciously we gathered flowery spoils
 From land and water ; lilies of each hue—
 Golden and white, that float upon the waves, 540
 And court the wind ; and leaves of that shy plant,
 (Her flowers were shed) the lily of the vale,
 That loves the ground, and from the sun withholds
 Her pensive beauty ; from the breeze her sweets.

Such product, and such pastime, did the place
 And season yield ; but, as we re-embarked,
 Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the shore
 Of that wild spot, the Solitary said
 In a low voice, yet careless who might hear, 549
 "The fire, that burned so brightly to our wish,
 Where is it now ?—Deserted on the beach—
 Dying, or dead ! Nor shall the fanning breeze
 Revive its ashes. What care we for this,
 Whose ends are gained ? Behold an emblem here
 Of one day's pleasure, and all mortal joys !
 And, in this unpremeditated slight
 Of that which is no longer needed, see
 The common course of human gratitude !"

This plaintive note disturbed not the repose
 Of the still evening. Right across the lake 560
 Our pinnacle moves ; then, coasting creek and bay,
 Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,

Where couch the spotted deer ; or raised our eyes
To shaggy steeps on which the careless goat
Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls ;
And thus the bark, meandering with the shore,
Pursued her voyage, till a natural pier
Of jutting rock invited us to land.

Alert to follow as the Pastor led,
We clomb a green hill's side ; and, as we clomb,
The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave 571
Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,
O'er the flat meadows and indented coast
Of the smooth lake, in compass seen :—far off,
And yet conspicuous, stood the old Church-tower,
In majesty presiding over fields
And habitations seemingly preserved
From all intrusion of the restless world
By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied, 580
And choice of moss-clad stones, whereon we couched
Or sate reclined ; admiring quietly
The general aspect of the scene ; but each
Not seldom over anxious to make known
His own discoveries ; or to favourite points
Directing notice, merely from a wish
To impart a joy, imperfect while unshared.
That rapturous moment never shall I forget
When these particular interests were effaced
From every mind !—Already had the sun, 590
Sinking with less than ordinary state,
Attained his western bound ; but rays of light—
Now suddenly diverging from the orb
Retired behind the mountain-tops or veiled
By the dense air—shot upwards to the crown
Of the blue firmament—aloft, and wide :
And multitudes of little floating clouds,
Through their ethereal texture pierced—ere we,
Who saw, of change were conscious—had become
Vivid as fire ; clouds separately poised,— 600

Innumerable multitude of forms
 Scattered through half the circle of the sky ;
 And giving back, and shedding each on each,
 With prodigal communion, the bright hues
 Which from the unapparent fount of glory
 They had imbibed, and ceased not to receive.
 That which the heavens displayed, the liquid deep
 Repeated ; but with unity sublime ! 608

CONCLUSION

[Lines 755 to the end.]

This vesper-service closed, without delay,
 From that exalted station to the plain
 Descending, we pursued our homeward course,
 In mute composure, o'er the shadowy lake,
 Under a faded sky. No trace remained
 Of those celestial splendours ; grey the vault— 760
 Pure, cloudless, ether ; and the star of eve
 Was wanting ; but inferior lights appeared
 Faintly, too faint almost for sight ; and some
 Above the darkened hills stood boldly forth
 In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attained
 Her mooring-place ; where, to the sheltering tree,
 Our youthful Voyagers bound fast her prow,
 With prompt yet careful hands. This done, we
 paced
 The dewy fields ; but ere the Vicar's door
 Was reached, the Solitary checked his steps ; 770
 Then, intermingling thanks, on each bestowed
 A farewell salutation ; and, the like
 Receiving, took the slender path that leads
 To the one cottage in the lonely dell :
 But turned not without welcome promise made
 That he would share the pleasures and pursuits
 Of yet another summer's day, not loth
 To wander with us through the fertile vales,
 And o'er the mountain-wastes. " Another sun,"
 Said he, " shall shine upon us, ere we part ; 780

Another sun, and peradventure more ;
If time, with free consent, be yours to give,
And season favours."

To enfeebled Power,
From this communion with uninjured Minds,
What renovation had been brought ; and what
Degree of healing to a wounded spirit,
Dejected, and habitually disposed
To seek, in degradation of the Kind,
Excuse and solace for her own defects ;
How far those erring notions were reformed ;
And whether aught, of tendency as good 791
And pure, from further intercourse ensued ;
This—if delightful hopes, as heretofore,
Inspire the serious song, and gentle Hearts
Cherish, and lofty Minds approve the past—
My future labours may not leave untold.

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